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The Week

THERE is cropping up throughout the country, and even in certain quarters of the administration, a deplorable tendency to postpone measures of fundamental reorganization in the hope that inflation will do the job. Like a high tide, plenty of money may cover all the old wrecks. On any expectation, this policy would be ruinous. If inflation proves to be only a short and weak speculative movement, as well it may, we should be left several months hence worse off than ever, and with all the work of building still to do. We should have still to get some social planning into agriculture and industry, to clean up the banks and the railroads, not to speak of industries like coal and oil, which the administration has hardly begun to tackle. If, on the other hand, inflation works as expected, all it will lead to will be another towering skyscraper on rotten foundations, unless something is done about those foundations. If Congress is allowed to adjourn without having done a single thing except to pass a few patching measures, historians are likely to call the first months of Mr. Roosevelt's term the greatest loss of opportunity in a generation.

IT WAS a mistake of first rank by the President to exclude from his emergency program the bill to shorten hours and fix minimum wages in industry by means of wage boards. Without this or some similar measure to stop deflation of labor, the farm bill is one-sided relief. Unless inflation really stimulates industry to an almost impossible degree, unemployment will not be relieved and the purchasing power of wage earners will decline further. A combination of this omission with the failure to reorganize the banking structure may easily lead to disaster during the summer or fall. Almost as disheartening as this action itself is the knowledge that it was probably induced by two of the most reactionary forces in public life. On the one hand, employers who have been relentless in their opposition to labor saw in it the entering wedge of labor organization and increased labor power, and condemned it for that reason. On the other hand, conservative forces in the national administration of the A. F. of L., always stupid and always incapable of extending the power of the unions, but frequently willing to follow the lead of self-seeking capitalists, opposed the wage boards on the basis of their outworn dogma. Here begins to appear the Achilles heel of an aggressive administration which possesses a wealth of vague good intentions, but no solid class backing and no well knit social philosophy.

IT IS, we believe, a fair summary of informed opinion to say that the Washington conversations have resulted in general disappointment and that little hope is now held for substantial success at the London Economic and Monetary Conference. Although some Washington correspondents supposed that the discussions would produce definite agreements to reduce specific tariffs between the United States and other countries individually, all decisions of this sort have been left over to the London Conference, where they will be thrown into the pot with a score of other subjects. Mr. Roosevelt, of course, was not in a position to promise definite tariff reductions, since he has not yet obtained from Congress the authority to revise individual schedules. In general, the conferees agreed that there should be no further competition in the depreciation of currencies for the sake of temporary advantage in foreign trade, that stabilization is

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desirable, that the general price level should be raised, restrictions on foreign trade removed and something be done about silver. These things are all true, and important, and most of the men who conferred with Mr. Roosevelt probably agreed with him in advance on a majority of the items. The real difficulty comes in the effort to persuade the governments—including that of the United States—to adopt these views.

THE reason for skepticism regarding the success of the London Conference is the same which has so often in the past justified pessimism regarding disarmament conferences. Economic nationalism is not a thing standing alone; it is as much a part of nationalism in general as is military armament. It is true that in the long run every country would benefit from an increase in foreign trade, just as every country would benefit from the savings made possible by cutting down armies and navies. But in addition to the specific difficulties which are enumerated in an article in this issue, there is also the general difficulty that before you can persuade any country to accept either of these common-sense measures for rehabilitation, you must alter existing national psychology in a considerable degree. That was one of the reasons why Mr. Roosevelt, in a rather impromptu and off-hand manner, planned the Washington conversations. Unfortunately, there is no evidence as yet that he has been successful. America's departure from the gold-exchange standard was widely interpreted all over Europe as being itself a gesture of economic nationalism on the part of the United States, aimed at Europe; and however unfair this interpretation, it would seem to have counteracted the psychological benefit which might otherwise have come from the Washington meetings.

AT THE Washington Naval Conference of 1921, Charles Evans Hughes, then Secretary of State, achieved a famous victory (or so it looked at the time) by a dramatic proposal on the first day of the conference for reduction and limitation of the tonnage of capital ships. The Roosevelt administration proposes to follow his example on the first day of the London Economic Conference with a suggestion which, however, is not such a well kept secret in advance. The plan is for Herriot's "tariff truce," through which the nations will agree not to raise tariffs, reduce quotas or set up new embargoes during the time that the conference is at work. Assuming that this is possible at all, it is obviously better that it should be done than that restrictions on trade should grow steadily worse while the conference is at work; yet it would be dangerous to regard such an agreement as an important end in itself. The restrictions on trade which are already in force constitute an almost insurmountable barrier to revival; unless they are substantially reduced, the conference will be a failure.

DEVELOPMENTS in regard to the war debts seem to support the view of those who argue that the best way out of this situation is for the European debtors to repudiate the whole amount, once and for all. Everyone now knows that these debts will not be paid; a few countries will perhaps meet the June 15 instalment, the others will not, and there the matter will rest until the theory is made to fit the facts, as was at last done with reparations. To be sure, a lump-sum agreement for a few hundred million dollars might be made, on terms like those with which the reparations question was settled—the money to be raised only if a loan could be floated on the American market. If this scheme were adopted, the result would probably be the same as in the case of reparations, which are today so completely a dead issue that no one any longer even mentions the word. Mr. Roosevelt announces, as he was technically bound to do, that he expects the June 15 payments to be met, and that no concessions will be made on war debts until after other economic agreements have been made in the London Conference; and meanwhile, he is preparing to ask from Congress authority to cut down the debts, with a grim prospect that he may not get it. The struggle is a simple one: the European debtors want cancellation so that they won't have to make open confession that they cannot and will not pay. Congress wants them to repudiate, so that no individual member need go home and tell his angry constituents that he voted to forgive Europe's debts while American voters are still crushed beneath their obligations. Since Congress has the whip hand, the chances seem to favor compulsory repudiation. To be sure, statesmanship might find a way out of this dilemma; but statesmanship is the theory and politics is the condition.

AFTER weeks of blowing first hot and then cold regarding a great program of public works, the Roosevelt administration has apparently decided the matter by a political compromise which, like so many compromises, will probably please nobody. The advocates of public works have insisted that $5,000 million or more must be spent in the shortest possible time in order to have the desired effect of increasing employment, spreading purchasing power and helping end the depression. The opponents, belonging to the grin-and-bear-it school, have wanted no expenditures at all, a firmly balanced budget and reduced taxes. The compromise, so we are told, is an expenditure of not more than $2,000 million in the next year. Presumably this includes the $1,350 million already authorized (under Mr. Hoover) for the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to spend on self-liquidating public works, which the R.F.C. has thus far obstinately refused to spend. A program of $2,000 million will create some employment and is thereby better than nothing; but it is certainly inadequate to do what the government wants to accomplish. Presumably, the comparative smallness of the program is because of doubt

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whether the necessary bonds can be floated to underwrite a really large scheme.

GERMANY'S Nationalist May Day was as effective a piece of demagogy as the Hitler regime has yet attempted. With characteristic showmanship, it assembled a tremendous gathering of men and women at the Tempelhofer airport, where speeches were made by Hitler and Nazi Cabinet members. Both the Socialist General Trade Union Federation and the Catholic Christian Trade Unions had instructed their members to attend this Fascist demonstration. Taking a leaf out of the album of the despised Russian Bolsheviki, the government had brought to Berlin eighty-seven workers from all corners of Germany, from Austria, the Saar, Alsace and from the German sections of Czechoslovakia, to take a prominent part in the festivities. Only that part of Tyrol which was ceded to Italy after the War was excepted, to spare the sensibilities of the Italian dictator. The loudly heralded one-year program that Hitler revealed to the world on this occasion was chiefly a mere repetition of the vague generalities which have hitherto taken the place of an economic program in the National Socialist government. A veiled attack on union wage-scale agreements, a comprehensive scheme for making jobs by public works and the promise of a compulsory labor service for youth, together with indefinite plans for farm aid, were the answer of the Chancellor to the anxious questions of the German people. How bankrupt Germany will finance these costly schemes was not explained. The entire demonstration, with its keynote emphasis on nationalism and militarism and its attacks on the revolutionary labor movement, was significant only as a manifestation of the complete and helpless subjugation of a once mighty labor movement. One day later, Hitler took a further step on the same direction by seizing the offices of all trade unions throughout Germany, arresting the chief officers, and putting Nazis in charge.

NOW that both parties have been defeated in Germany, the Communists blame the Socialists, the Socialists blame the Communists, and both with reason. A review by M. J. Bonn, on page 370 of this issue, presents one side of the case. Professor Bonn, one of the most distinguished German economists, was rector of the Berlin Academy of Commerce until the recent counter-revolution. He writes from the standpoint of those who believe in saving democratic capitalism from all dictatorships, whether of the proletariat or of a Fascist party. He is wrong, we believe, in saying that the Communists were responsible for introducing physical violence into German home politics. The revolts in the years from 1918 to 1923 claimed few victims except among the Communists themselves; the physical violence was chiefly practised by their adversaries. On the other hand, he is right in his contention that these revolts "were responsible for the return to power of the professional soldier: The new republic . . . needed their help to defend the sober German workers against the mad onslaught of shrill Communists." But in the name of what, precisely, was the republic defending the sober German workers? Was it not defending them in the name of capitalism?—and were not the Socialist Ministers who called for the help of professional soldiers acting as the road-breakers first for capitalist statesmen and then for Hitler himself? At that time the Social Democrats were by far the strongest party in Germany. From the moment when a Socialist government suppressed the revolt of the Spartakists (January-February, 1918) they entered a slow decline; but even as late as the autumn of 1932 there were 8 million Socialist voters and the Socialists and Communists together mustered 14 millions, as against 12 million Nazis. If the two parties had united, Hitler could not have conquered them both. Professor Bonn's review suggests one reason why they did not unite: the Communists were bent on destroying capitalism, the Socialists on preserving it till it died a natural death.

SEVEN Iowa counties are under martial law. All civil authority, including that of the courts, is suspended while soldiers ride across the countryside arresting farmers of whom, as we go to press, sixty have been put in jail. Telephone service in the rural area is suspended by order of the military. The occasion for this astonishing display of force is active protests by the farmers against further mortgage-foreclosure sales, which have been going on despite the fact that the state legislature has passed a bill declaring a mortgage policy. A district judge was taken from his courtroom and roughly handled (although he suffered no serious harm) when he refused to suspend mortgage-foreclosure proceedings temporarily, until the constitutionality of the new state law could be determined.

THE violence used by the farmers is certainly regrettable, but their provocation can be easily understood. They see the Iowa courts ruthlessly going ahead to take away farmers' homes and all their other property, in the interest of mortgage holders many of whom are persons or institutions of great wealth. They see this done in defiance of the will of the Iowa legislature. At our distance from the scene, it is impossible to see any justification whatever for the action of Governor Clyde L. Herring in declaring martial law and turning loose on the countryside a large number of National Guardsmen who, if they are like most National Guardsmen everywhere, are itching for a chance to shoot somebody. In a few weeks, at most, a majority of the mortgage-foreclosure sales will have been halted under the new federal law. In view of this fact, to go on with the sales now is as senseless as was the killing of soldiers in the Great War

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at two minutes of eleven on the morning of Armistice Day. Somebody in Iowa apparently wants to be known as the Hitler of the Corn Belt. It is high time that his ambitions in this direction were suppressed.

THE economy programs of Hoover and Roosevelt have worked hardships on many groups of government employees, but it is doubtful whether any have been so hard hit as the substitute workers in the Post Office. Not only did the law cut their wages 15 percent (just after they had succeeded in getting an 8 1/3-percent reduction rescinded) but the regular force of workers have been used to the utmost possible extent, thus cutting down the amount of employment for the men on the substitute list. An inquiry among a large group of these men in New York City recently revealed an average wage of $6 a week. It is impossible to do this work and pursue any other occupation simultaneously, even assuming that other jobs were to be had, which everyone knows they are not. Eighty-nine percent of the substitutes are supporting families; many of those who, in their desperate need, have applied for local charitable relief have been rejected because they are employees of the federal government. The period of doing substitute work averages from two and one-half years for clerks and laborers to as high as six and one-half years for letter carriers. While these are New York conditions, there is no reason to believe things are much better in any other city. The Substitute Post Office Employees' Association has recently held a convention and formulated a set of proposals to be submitted to Congress. The most important are requests for a maximum period of one year as a substitute, and for a guarantee of thirty hours a week of work, on a weekly salary of $19.50. These demands certainly sound reasonable enough for government employees in "the richest country in the world" and Congress ought to regard them as a minimum.

Roosevelt and Business: A Word of Warning

NOW THAT the President has the legal power to inflate, he must be wondering just how to do it. The immediate speculative reaction in the markets may easily peter out, just as it did in Great Britain after the first flurry of excitement over going off gold. The problem will then be what it has been for so many months, not just to create money and credit, but to get it used. In order to inflate, we must have more spending. That is the crucial factor which monetary theorists of inflationary persuasion often overlook. But all signs are that the administration is not overlooking it.

There are only two main ways to bring about more spending—first, spending by government; second, spending by private business. In order to test whether we are going the way of inflation, two things must be watched—whether the government is spending more than it is currently receiving from taxes, and whether bank loans and investments in private business are expanding.

The first way is, in general, the way of public works. Government borrowing for ordinary expenses is not inflation so long as these expenses are not growing. The government must actually let more contracts, buy more materials and employ more labor, in order to put more money in circulation. A controversy is now raging about the size and timing of the public spending program; the lower limit being about $1,000 million and the upper $5,000 million. Even the upper figure probably would not be enough to inflate very much, and the chances are that it will not be reached. It is argued that the real job is to get men employed in their ordinary industries rather than trying to put an abnormally large number on the public-works pay roll.

And here arises the dilemma and the danger facing the administration. If it just sits tight and waits in the hope that private industry will make use of the credit resources made available, it will be doing precisely what the Hoover administration did for so long, without result. But if it adopts some measure actively to stimulate the use of credit by private industry, something like the Kent plan, for instance, it rushes into the field of government participation in, and control of, industry—a field containing immense possibility of social gain and also great danger of social loss.

The New Republic has been a consistent advocate of social-economic planning, but it has again and again pointed out that the objectives of planning, the methods, and the powers in control, are of crucial importance. There is a kind of "planning" wanted by certain advanced business leaders, and now being urged upon the administration, which is wholly unsound. This is planning by single industries to restrict output in the interests of raising prices, without more than formal supervision by government and without real power or participation by labor. It may appear superficially that every industry would now benefit by producing less and boosting its prices, but this is a basic mistake, not only during prosperity but during depression. Some few industries are victims of real overproduction, but not all at once. Some prices are too low, but some prices, on the other hand, are too high. In any serious attempt at planning there ought to be a central agency to decide which products must be restricted and which must be expanded. It ought to have a price policy; it ought to know which prices to raise and which to cut. There should be power to increase output and lower prices as well as the reverse. All this implies that there must be strong representation, in the operation of any such scheme, for the interests of consumers as a whole, of industry as a whole, of labor as a whole.

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To turn planning over to separate groups of capitalist producers, each seeking to restrict output and raise prices, is to diminish the means of life for the whole nation. It is to start an internecine inter-industrial competition. It is allowing private monopoly to do its worst.

With many of the schemes urged upon the administration you would not have national economic planning at all. Nobody in real power would be continuously taking thought about the interest of the whole people, or representing them. You would just have rather indiscriminate repeal of the anti-trust laws. What private monopoly can do, and what it cannot do, has been well illustrated in recent years in foreign countries where anti-trust laws do not exist—and even, to a large extent, here, where they are not enforced. It would be a bitter piece of irony if the "new deal" turned out to be nothing in essence after all but turning the United States completely over to the big corporations!

What Hope for the London Conference?

MR. MACDONALD and M. Herriot have said their pieces at Washington, received the official Roosevelt smile and have gone their way. Diplomatically phrased Teutonic growls have preceded German's representative, Dr. Schacht, across the Atlantic. Slowly, out of all this ceremonial talk, the positions which the three great European Powers intend to take at the World Economic Conference are becoming clear.

The avowed purpose of the World Economic Conference is to achieve tariff disarmament. All the ingenious schemes being advocated for closer financial collaboration among the Powers, and for strengthening the World Bank at Basle, are bound to be largely sterile unless in the reasonably near future the world's present prohibitive tariffs can be lowered. It is on this crucial point of tariff reductions, therefore, that the conversations at Washington must be judged.

It may be said at once that, unless Mr. Roosevelt is prepared to recommend generous, uncompensated reductions in our own tariff, the prospects of accomplishment at the World Economic Conference appear microscopic. On the basis of present indications, we are going to see at London the familiar, wearisome spectacle of the statesmen of the world, clad in pith helmets and puttees, carrying elephant guns and surrounded by sweating, grinning experts, industriously engaged in hunting mosquitoes.

The sole definite tariff proposal made at Washington has been M. Herriot's suggested world-tariff truce, since put forward by Mr. Norman H. Davis at the agenda committee's meeting in London. By the terms of this truce, every nation pledges itself to leave its fundamental tariff law unaltered for the duration of the Conference. This is sheer window-dressing, since nations already have tariff laws which are as nearly prohibitive as bureaucratic resourcefulness can devise.

This tariff truce, however, is all that M. Herriot could offer. The French position, as explained by the French experts, is clear-cut. France, relatively, has the highest price level of any of the Great Powers. The French government, by devices analogous to Mr. Hoover's lamented Farm Board and the R.F.C., has fiercely attempted to ward off deflation in France. These measures have not been notably successful, but the French still have hope.

If France were to throw down its tariff walls—so runs the French argument—manufactured goods would rush into France from the deflated countries, particularly from Germany and England. Quick, drastic deflation would be enforced throughout the French economic structure. It would be suicidal for any French government to permit this. If necessary, France would prefer economic isolation. In a recent, half-hysterical speeech, Premier Daladier said defiantly: "Within the frontiers of *la patrie* and its colonies, we can resist suffering as well as, and better than, other countries."

The British experts at Washington had a very different story to tell, but one equally unpromising for tariff reductions. At the Ottawa Conference, last summer, England agreed to give its Dominions, for a period of five years, a certain definite proportion of the London raw-material and foodstuffs market. Since then, England has been carrying on negotiations with most of the nations of the sterling bloc, and has concluded agreements with Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Argentina. In these treaties, the British have parceled out the right to sell in England with almost comic meticulousness. Denmark, for example, now has the right to furnish England with exactly 62 percent of its imports of ham and bacon. In return, it should be noted, Denmark has pledged itself to buy not less than 80 percent of its coal from Britain.

The British also have a treaty with one gold-standard country, Germany. Germany receives a practical monopoly of imports into England of clocks, certain musical instruments, various types of toys and razor blades. In return, Germany agrees to buy 180,000 tons of British coal monthly. It is obvious that these agreements carry the quota principle of tariff legislation to previously undreamed-of lengths, and also that they represent a certain crude kind of international economic planning.

The British, at Washington, said in effect to Mr. Roosevelt: "We are historically a nation of free traders. We would like to do away with tariffs altogether. If you, Mr. Roosevelt, can persuade the world to return to international laissez-faire, where price is the only factor determining the flow of international trade, we shall be all for it. We wish you luck. Meantime, however, we intend to keep our new tariff treaties. Because we know we

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are going to sell Germany 180,000 tons of our coal a month, we are able to assure Germany of purchasing power for its saxophones and harmonicas. We think treaties like this compel international trade, rather than hinder it.

"Now we don't wish to be indelicate, Mr. Roosevelt, but what about the American tariff? At the present time, America sells to England about five times as much as we sell to you. And in addition, we have the war debts to pay. If you would agree to cancel the debts, and lower your tariff so that we could increase our sales in America by about $300 million a year, our trade totals would just about balance, and we then would be glad to consider entering a tariff arrangement with you."

As Sir Walter Layton, most gifted of the British experts, plaintively wrote home to The London News-Chronicle, this British point of view required "much patient explanation" at Washington. Whatever you may think about it, there would seem no hope of tariff disarmament by England.

Germany, which now appears on the Washington scene in the person of Dr. Schacht, is the one major Power which has deliberately carried through a ruthless policy of deflation. Beginning with the Brüning emergency decrees in 1930, the German industrialists have again and again forced down wages. The result has been immense unemployment and a subhuman standard of living for the whole nation. All this has been done with the aim of enabling Germany to undersell the other industrial powers in the world's markets.

When it is pointed out to Germans that their low wages make it extremely perilous for any other country to think of lowering its tariff, their reply runs about as follows: "What else would you have us do? We are an industrial nation, and at the same time an international debtor. We can pay our debts only in manufactured goods, and to sell our goods we must undercut world prices."

This is undoubtedly what Dr. Schacht is going to tell Mr. Roosevelt. The primary requisite of world recovery, he will say, is that American creditors agree to scale down substantially Germany's private external debts. Only then can Germany afford to let its wage level rise, and only then can the German government relax its present iron control of imports—a measure much more damaging to international trade than any conceivable tariff.

The net result of the Washington conversations, in short, is that none of the three great European Powers, for very different reasons, is prepared to do anything towards reducing tariffs. It can be predicted that the Japanese representative, when he arrives, will be still more obdurate. If any sweeping tariff reductions are to be made in the immediate future—in time, that is, to be registered at the World Economic Conference—they will have to be made by America.

There is something to be said for drastic, unilateral tariff reduction by the United States. Ever since the World War, we have had an unbalanced creditor position in world trade. From the standpoint of laissez-faire world capitalism, the technically correct thing for us to do is to throw down our tariffs, and hope that the losses which will come to our hitherto protected industries will be more than made up by the gains resulting from the general increase in world trade.

It now seems probable that Mr. Roosevelt may be forced to agree, at the World Economic Conference, to virtual cancellation of the war debts under one guise or another. To propose, in addition, the uncompensated reduction of the American tariff would be to risk a battle royal with Congress, and there is no evidence that Mr. Roosevelt has any stomach for such a battle. However, if he does not take the lead at London, there will be no tariff reduction by any of the major industrial powers.

A Clue to Hitlerism

THE READER who wishes to understand the political emotions of the German people can find no better documents than the German novels which have come to us recently in translation. For economic crisis and political struggle have so long had Germany in their grip that every manifestation of human life hangs upon them and every novel, in effect and often in intent, is a political work.

Perhaps the best introduction to the situation is afforded by Hans Fallada's "Kleiner Mann, Was Nun?," announced for June publication here by Simon and Schuster. It is the story of the young clerk Pinneberg and his little wife Lämbchen, people whom the author has idealized with a tender humor and a sentimental irony, but who represent adequately and touchingly the norm of decent unperceptive humanity. Pinneberg and Lämbchen have a problem: how, on 200 marks a month, to live in private so that they may love each other, to have a starched shirt and collar for Pinneberg, and to keep the baby clean and fat. But eventually the perpetual fear of their lives materializes: Pinneberg is fired. They scrape along on dole, privation and Lämbchen's sewing while Pinneberg grows logged with idleness, humiliation and despair. One day he is taunted into throwing away his stiff collar, the sacred symbol of his class; almost immediately he is hustled by a policeman; in shame he realizes that he is no longer a member of society. The book leaves him with his miserable head on Lämbchen's comfortable knees. But when he lifts his head he must face the question of the book's title: What now? Fallada has consciously avoided political partisanship, but he has placed his hero on the threshold of the only course of action open to him —the political.

The society from which the hustling of the police finally expelled the little man was that of republican Germany, ruled by the more or less liberal parties of the Center. It was a society ever on the edge

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of the extinction into which it has now fallen and its novels express the despair which, explicit or implied, accepted or blinked, lay at its heart. So fine a book (when it is stripped of its mysticism and love story) as Feuchtwanger's "Success" hides the defeat under a brave show. For, when it has brilliantly laid bare the economic and psychological derangement which makes for willful social injustice, it can offer as a corrective nothing more decisive than the writing of more books like this very "Success." Hans Liepmann's "Peace Broke Out" can give an excellent picture of the misery of the German people, but it can see this misery only as caused by events which are meteorological in their uncontrollability. Even when, as in I. M. Frank's "Fever Heat," the theme is the necessity of political action, it is worked out in terms of almost willful defeat. When the liberal schoolmaster, who has fought to keep pedagogy "above" politics, is at last forced to realize that he cannot help but function politically, he gives his allegiance to the feeble State party, and when it is overwhelmed by a Nazi victory, he commits suicide, thus anticipating the recent action of the party itself. Or, if defeat is not the resolution, escape takes its place, as in Leonhard Frank's "The Singers," where, after a sensitive portrayal of the pathetic lot of five dispossessed bourgeois cronies, the author manages, fortuitously, to get them all back on the road to comfort, and deadens all impact with an interwoven tale of romantic love.

Although physical defeat is the theme of two translated Communist novels, they are, of course, very far from despair. German Communist culture has been active and rich, but neither of these books represents its best achievements. One can scarcely generalize from two books, but their unrelieved reiteration of physical suffering endured and of physical courage displayed and their almost complete lack of dialectical insight seem to reflect the causes of the defeat of the German party. Hans Marchwitza's "Storm over the Ruhr," a novel of the industrial civil war of 1920, is devoted to the thesis that militance and cohesion are necessary to the proletarian movement, but though events have proved the truth of this the novel itself does not. Klaus Neukrantz's "Barricades in Berlin" is a piece of literal reporting of the cruel attack made by the Social Democrat police when the Communists insisted on observing May Day of 1929. Its dialectical material is far more effective than that of the former book, but it is still relatively unimportant. For the American, perhaps the chief usefulness of the books lies in their illustration of the long tradition of ruthless force against radical movements in Germany. Yet were Pinneberg, the little man, to turn to them, he would at least find a world of affirmation and courage, of emotional clarity and pride which might help him from his sodden shame.

It is not, however, from men like Pinneberg that Communists are recruited; much rather do his type and class fill the Nazi ranks. Yet he is a decent fellow; it is hard to conceive him answering the "What now?" by placing his heel on someone's teeth. But Fallada's book was written in 1930; much can happen to decency in three years. And if he felt any queasiness, the little man had only to identify himself with the unemployed hero of Karl Aloys Schenzinger's "Fired." Surely no one could be more decent than this faithful friend and loyal lover; the emotions which bring him to Hitlerism are positively knightly and his inductor into the mysteries of the Storm Battalions is a veritable saint.

But as a presentation of the Nazi ethos "Fired" is but a footling work beside Hanns Heinz Ewers' "Rider of the Night." This is a truly astonishing book which indicates how carefully the Nazis have taken advantage not only of an economic but also of a psychotic crisis. It declares as an important element in the philosophy of the swastika the defense of the instincts of the heart and feelings from the encroachments the Communists are making against them with the reason. In accordance with this philosophy, the book is a farrago of all the irrational elements of Dostoevsky (sainted harlots for the cause), of Wagner (mystical incest), of Nietzsche (the worship of sorrow and suffering). It offers the very world which is most tempting to certain starved and frustrated souls—the world of superstitious mythology (the heroine sacrifices herself to a goddess of death for the hero's luck), of eroticism (the heroine's step-ins for a political assignation are described like implements in the Grail ritual), of hysterical and irresponsible action.

The macabre quality of the events in Germany has led some people to doubt the truth of the reports. "Rider of the Night," by an almost official apologist of Hitlerism, presents events even more horrible than any that have appeared in the newspapers and calmly justifies them. By an *ironical* mistake, the hero's sister is seized by a Nazi band, shaved bald, stripped, beaten, given a cathartic and set on the road. She goes mad and dies. When her brother learns of her fate he writes: "She was driven to death by my own men, my good comrades." Never, probably, have values been so suddenly and so terribly transvaluated!

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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"Relief"

The Last Gasp of Private Charity

THE RELIEF program now being carried on in the city of New York is one of the big developments to which we can point-with-pride for visitors. "Dwarfs the relief of Belgium in World War days," the newspapers have commented. Relief was an $80 million business in 1932, and is estimated at $100 million for 1933. It has naturally caused a great bureaucracy to spring up, resembling the wartime agencies and manned chiefly by recruits from the masses of unemployed. The "Gibson Committee" spreads its painfully acquired funds in many directions and indicates the serious participation of bankers and big business. The actual character of the whole project—though we are in a new-fashioned crisis—grows in part out of the old-fashioned charity bureaus existing here and in part out of the city's public-welfare departments. Whatever leadership there is, is furnished by the social workers of yesterday, drawn from the ranks of the Y.M.C.A., the Salvation Army, the Jewish and Catholic charities and the various non-sectarian and university groups; grown tremendously important, they live through a veritable trade boom, strenuous and picturesque. Slum workers along the seamy edges of the town, they now find almost a third of the city's area given over to slums.

It is not my intention, nor is it possible here, to give in detail the picture of a relief organization, made up of more than seventy-five different private-charity agencies as well as numerous city and state bureaus. One realizes how antiquated this whole system is for dealing with mass relief in these new times on learning that it has been necessary to issue a pamphlet listing all the parallel, overlapping and underlying organizations for public aid (often with similar-sounding names). It has also been necessary to set up an Information Service telling you where to go for help if you need it—"If in doubt call Gramercy 5-7000." As in Wall Street a clearing house of charities—the Social Service Exchange, with its Central Index—has been created to overcome confusion and especially duplication of payments. And at the top, a Coördinating Committee having slightly more than advisory powers, with Al Smith as a member, has been wisely set up. But on the whole it is rather wonderful that this vast, cumbersome system works even as well as it does. It speaks worlds for the good nature and especially the native organizing spirit of the local citizens—never mind, they have as much of this as ever, and still take naturally to maps, graphs, zoning systems, working with a commendable energy against the very confusion and difficulties their own bad habits produce—it speaks worlds for them that they have been able to expand their services greatly, ever since the beginning of 1931, and that there has been less rather than more friction, politics, racketeering, than was naturally to be expected.

The spirit of the great organizations for depression service—which insiders believe are here to stay—was explained by an important official: "We regard this as *preventive* work. If it were not for all that"—pointing to several hundred clerks before desks, telephones or card indexes—"there would be riots and bloodshed all over this town."

Out of the welter of municipal and private services the whole loosely combined relief system has worked out in this way: the brunt of the new relief work is borne by the city's Public Welfare Department, greatly expanded, by means of the Emergency Home Relief Bureau (giving "doles" to some 54,000 families), and also by means of the city's Work Bureau (giving "made work" to about 36,000 family heads). Next in importance comes the Gibson Committee's Emergency Work Bureau, aiding 11,800 (more largely "white collar") people with "made work"; and in smaller proportion also giving family relief, food packages and donations to some of the private institutions, such as the Salvation Army, thus covering less than a third as much ground as do the government bureaus. Other smaller sectors of the depression's front line are taken up by the various private-charity and government bureaus already in existence to deal normally with veterans, mothers, children, the blind, the feeble-minded, Finnish immigrants, etc.—all working nowadays under an uncommon strain.

The system that has grown up for dealing with those officially styled "Homeless and Destitute Men" is highly organized. Here one sees the relief work now going on at its most efficient and most backward. It is a problem of mass relief, like the handling and quartering and provisioning of an army, or a horde of prisoners. The city's long established Municipal Lodging House, at 435 East Twenty-fifth Street, housing and feeding two meals a day to some 800 "bums," has been expanded, by the addition of disused public buildings—the "Dock" at the foot of East Twenty-fifth Street, and the ferry-house at South Ferry—so as to receive 4,500 guests, with arrangements for overflow to other quarters. The Salvation Army, with its rich experience in the field of "down-and-outers," has expanded establishments like its Bowery Mission and taken over donated factory space so that it can shelter approximately 3,000 more men nightly and furnish meals at its canteens to many thousand more mem-

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bers of the bread line. These two agencies are the chief outlets for direct aid to homeless men.

Most of the money by far that is being spent for relief, more than 90 percent of it, goes to the aid of families still residing in their own homes. Such relief, literally the "dole," was forbidden the city government up to 1931, when new statutes were passed. The Home Relief Bureau that has grown up since then out of the city's Public Welfare Department, like the other new institutions for family aid, is complicated, and in its functioning less visible to the naked eye. On the whole it is a less barbarous administration than that for the homeless single men, though its actual "coverage," or effectiveness, is even smaller and its character equally provisory.

In the five boroughs twenty-eight local agencies have been established at certain public-school buildings where stricken families may apply for food tickets, in the form of vouchers exchangeable at groceries and having an average value, it is claimed, of $6.60 a week. There are wide variations, however: married couples without children report that they receive as little as $3.80 a week for food. Rent, in addition, if not over $25 a month, is paid on alternate months; similarly gas and electric bills are paid. If you fail to get help at the Home Relief Bureau, for some reason, the Mayor's Official Committee, working through the police stations, may possibly dole out $1 a week per person, $10 a week for a family of ten. (This semi-public service supported by city employees is about to stop owing to recent salary cuts.)

The City Work Bureau takes persons off the list of the Home Relief Bureau, whenever it can do so, and sets them to work at $4 a day for approximately half-time or less. In addition, the privately supported Emergency Work Bureau (Gibson Committee) receives applications only by letter and distributes part-time "made work," whose value has now apparently been cut to about $54 a month.

While being investigated for home relief or work relief a family may wait a week, or even two weeks; it may, of course, even disappear. After a man has received a job through the Gibson Committee, usually the first thing he asks is: "How can I get some money?" But he must wait a fortnight after he begins to work before he is paid anything. In any case the chances of obtaining such aid, "dole" or "made work" are about two out of five.

The government agencies together at the beginning of this year were aiding about 90,000 families and individuals, the Gibson Committee caring for only some 11,800 in addition. Mr. Harvey Gibson announced during the last charity drive that 50,000 more families were in dire need. However, the police census ordered last December by former Mayor McKee went further: it showed that 391,000 families in New York were affected by unemployment; that 230,000 of this number declared that they were in immediate need; and of these there were 140,000, nearly 60 percent of the total, for whom nothing whatsoever was being done. (Since these reports were made the situation has worsened rather than improved; the city is poorer, the philanthropists have grown "tighter," and the relief organization, at the top, has been seething with dissension.)

The social workers in the city or private institutions are fully aware of the ineffectiveness of a relief system which attempts to treat only "the most urgent cases," which aids only a minority of the unemployed. No matter how well meaning they are or how hard they work at their "preventing" and healing, the wounds lie too deep. The economics of the going system (in continued process of deflation) spreads poverty faster than emergency "doles" can be given. And while the more desperate section of the unemployed is preserved at the lowest possible level of buying power, new sections use up their last resources and become "urgent"; in the meantime private-charity and government funds dwindle, and bankers cry for economy.

"New York is Hunger Town!" one of the welfare officials exclaimed to me. "If you told me there was a family that had money enough to live on, or jobs to count on, I wouldn't believe you!"

The last prolonged "drive" of the Gibson Committee caused a silent panic within the whole Emergency Work Bureau, which operated without funds for a solid month. One of its leading officials said to me: *"This is the last gasp of private charity!"*

The temporary bureaucracies of relief thrown up by the crisis have all the character of a frail expeditionary force sent into a war that is expected to last only three months, and which has become instead a World War. Their theory is still essentially that of charitably helping "bums" and weaklings over the rough places rather than masses cut down by a kind of economic massacre. Nevertheless, the cost of these projects becomes a more and more onerous burden for our taxpayers and capitalists. It may, in any event, hasten the ruin of a local government long weakened by political dishonesty. But the cosmic joke on capitalism is that if the relief expenditures were by some device made five times greater, say $500 million a year, the old order might be saved, through correcting the fatal want of buying power in the proletariat. However, intelligent social workers believe that if any effective relief is to come out of the present blundering system, it must be national in its scope and command, rather than local, as Mr. Hoover wanted it; it must redistribute entirely the buying power of the total population, controlling hours of work and production, raising consumption—but such a solution, with or without engineers, would mean state socialism.

Instead, there is being created here another nation, in the sense that the poor and the rich are really "two nations" living side by side. The effect of work relief, for instance, has been held by the authorities to be "best for the morale" of those elected for it. But the morale of men who earn $54 a month for the total support of their families,

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one observes, is not much better than their purchasing power. They, as well as the almost equally fortunate groups who have home relief ranging from $2 to $6.60 a week, seem as yet only bewildered and stupefied at being thrust back toward an abysmally low standard of living—the New American standard. The mode of life, the reflexes of this other nation, grow deeply altered. It does not revolt as yet, but the vast inferiority complex that gains over it must sooner or later have its pathological consequences. MATTHEW JOSEPHSON.

This is the first of two articles by Mr. Josephson. —THE EDITORS.

How Scottsboro Happened

OUT OF the contradictory testimony of the trial, the Scottsboro story finally emerged. It unwound itself slowly, tortuously. As witnesses for the prosecution and the defense succeeded one another, they revealed what took place on the southbound freight between Chattanooga and Huntsville, and how they happened to be riding on it, and how they lived at home and in the hobo jungles. It was a murky story of degradation and horror that rivals anything written by Faulkner.

The Scottsboro case is not simply one of race hatred. It arose from the life that was followed by both accusers and accused, girls and boys, white and black. If it was intolerance and race prejudice which convicted Haywood Patterson, it was poverty and ignorance which wrongfully accused him.

Victoria Price was spawned by the unspeakable conditions of Huntsville. These medium-sized mill towns breed a sordid viciousness which makes gangsters seeem as benign as Robin Hood and the East Side a cultural paradise. As you leave Huntsville you pass through a muddle of mean shacks on brick posts standing in garbage-littered yards. They are dreary and without hope. No one has planted a bit of garden anywhere.

Victoria Price grew up here, worked in the mill for long hours at miserable wages, and here was arrested for vagrancy, for violation of the Volstead Act, and served a sentence in the workhouse on a charge of adultery. Here she developed the callousness which made it possible for her to accuse nine innocent boys. In jail in Scottsboro she quarreled with the boy who remained on the train, Orval Gilley, alias Carolina Slim, and with Lester Carter, the Knoxville Kid, because they refused to testify with her. Orval Gilley said he would "burn in torment" if he testified against innocent boys, but Victoria, the product of the mean mill-town streets, said she "didn't care if every nigger in Alabama was stuck in jail forever."

The chief actors in the trial besides Haywood Patterson, the trial's dark core, were the three hobo children: Victoria Price of the hard face; Ruby Bates, the surprise witness who recanted her former testimony and insisted that she had accused the boys in the first place because "Victoria had told her to"; and Lester Carter, the girls' companion in the "jungle."

On both Ruby Bates and Lester Carter the jury smelled the North where they had been. Carter offended them by his gestures, by the fact that he said "Negro"—showing "subversive Northern influences." Ruby Bates was dressed in a neat, cheap gray dress and a little gray hat; Lester Carter had on a cheap suit of clothes. Their clothes probably threw their testimony out of court for the jury. The jury, as well as most people in the courtroom, believed these clothes were "bought with Jew money from New York."

Ruby Bates, Victoria Price and Lester Carter among them gave a picture of the depths of our society. They told how the hobo children live, of their innocent depravity, of their promiscuous and public lovemaking.

Lester Carter, just off the chain gang for pilfering laundry, was taken to Victoria Price's house by Jack Tiller, the "boy friend" for whom she had been serving time in the workhouse. Carter was staying at the Tillers'. There would be words between Tiller and his wife, and Tiller would go over to Victoria's. It is interesting to note that Tiller was in the witness room during the trial, but was never put on the stand.

In the Prices' front room there was a bed; behind that was a kitchen room, and a shed, and a yard behind that. Victoria's mother and Carter talked together. Tiller and Victoria sat on the bed. Later they went out. The next night Victoria introduced Ruby Bates to Lester Carter, and the four of them went off to a hobo jungle. "We all sat down near a bendin' lake of water where they was honeysuckles and a little ditch. I hung my hat up on a little limb—" And here in each other's presence they all made love.

"Did you see Jack Tiller and Victoria Price?" Lester Carter was asked.

"Sure. They would scoot down on top of us. They was on higher ground." All four of them were laughing at this promiscuous lovemaking. It began to rain, so they went to a box car in the railroad yards. Here they spent the night together and made plans to go West and "hustle the towns." The girls both had on overalls, Victoria's worn over her three dresses; both had coats, probably their entire wardrobe. The girls were already what Judge Horton had called them in his charge to the jury: "women

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of the underworld," whose amusements were their promiscuous love affairs, whose playgrounds were hobo swamps and the unfailing freight cars.

Why not? What was to stop them? What did Huntsville or Alabama or the United States offer a girl for virtue and probity and industry? A mean shack, many children for whom there would not be enough food or clothing or the smaller decencies of life, for whom at best there would be long hours in the mill—and, as now, not even the certainty of work.

With hunger, dirt, sordidness, the reward of virtue, why not try the open road, the excitement of new places? One could always be sure of a boy friend, a Chattanooga Chicken or a Knoxville Kid or a Carolina Slim, to be a companion in the jungle and to go out "a-bummin' " for food. More fun for the girls to "hustle the towns" than to stay in Huntsville in a dirty shack, alternating long hours in the mill with no work at all. Ruby Bates's mother had had nine children. What had Ruby ever seen in life that rewarded virtue with anything but work and insecurity?

In the cozy box car they went on with their exciting plans. Jack Tiller said he had better not go with the girls on account of the Mann Act and the conviction already on record between him and Victoria. He could join them later. So the two girls and the Knoxville Kid went on to Chattanooga together, bumming their way.

Victoria Price had said on the witness stand that when they got to Chattanooga they went to "Callie Broochie's" boarding house, "a two-story white house on Seventh Street," and had looked for work. In reality they had stayed all night in the hobo jungle, where they picked up Orval Gilley, alias Carolina Slim, another of the great band of wandering children, another of those for whom this civilization had no place. Here the boys made a "little shelter from boughs" for the girls and went off to "stem" for food. Nellie Booth's chili cart gave them some, and "tin cans in which to heat coffee." Many different witnesses saw them there in the hobo swamp in the morning. The quartet boarded the freight car which was to make so much dark history. They found five other white boys on the train. Scattered the length of the freight car were Negro boys.

Among these were four very young boys, Negroes from Chattanooga, Andy and Roy Wright, Haywood Patterson and another boy of fourteen. One of the Wright boys was thirteen. These little Negro-boy hoboes stayed by themselves on an oil-tank car. White tramps came past and "tromped their hands."

"Look out, white boy," Haywood Patterson warned. "Yo'll make me fall off!"

"That'd be *too* bad!" said the white boy. "There'd be one nigger less!" Then the white boys got off the train as it was going slow, and "chunked" the Negro boys with rocks.

There is one precious superiority which every white person has in the South. No matter how low he has fallen, how degraded he may be, he still can feel above the "niggers." It was this feeling of superiority that started the fight between the white hobo boys and the black hoboes on the train betwen Chattanooga and Huntsville.

It started because seven white-boy bums were above riding even on the same train with Negroes. The Negroes decided to rush the white boys. The four very young Negroes were asked to come along by the older boys. The dozen Negroes on the train fought the seven white boys, and put them off the train.

The only decent moment in the whole story was the dragging back of Orval Gilley—Carolina Slim—by one of the Negro boys, apparently Haywood Patterson. He had pulled the white boy Gilley back on the train by his belt, perhaps saving his life. When asked on the witness stand if he had committed the crime, Haywood Patterson cried in a loud voice—

"Do yo' think I'd 'a pulled a white boy back to be a witness if I'd ben a-fixin' to rape any white woman?"

Gilley then climbed in the gondola with the girls, a "churt car" full of finely crushed rock for mending the road bed. It was in this car that the conductor later found Victoria's snuff box. The four young Negro boys from Chattanooga went back to their former places and sat facing each other. The white boys who had been put off the train complained to the authorities at Stevenson, who telephoned ahead.

At Paint Rock a posse of seventy-five men arrested the nine Negroes in different places on the train. The girls in overalls, fearing a vagrancy charge, then accused the Negro boys of assault.

Ruby Bates, Victoria Price and their companions, Orval Gilley and Lester Carter, were all taken to the jail together. The rest of the story is known.

Observe that this quartet of young people has no standards, no training, no chance of advancement; that there is for them not even the promise of low-paid steady employment. They have one thing only—the trains going somewhere, the box cars for homes, the jungles for parks. They pilfer laundry, clothes, as a matter of course. They bum their food, the girls "pick up a little change hustling the towns," and it's all a lot better than the crowded shacks at home and the uncertain work in the mills.

Apparently Victoria had come in and out of Chattanooga often. Lewis, a Negro who lived near the jungle, the one whose "sick wheezin' hawg" wandered in and out of the story, testified that Victoria had often begged food "off his old woman." Victoria Price and Ruby Bates are no isolated phenomenon. The children's bureau reports 200,000 children under twenty-one wandering through the land. These two girls are part of a great army of adventurous, venal girls who like this way of life.

For it is a way of life, something that from the bottom is rotting out our society. Boys and girls are squeezed out of the possibility of making a living,

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they are given nothing else; but there are the shining rails and trains moving somewhere, so the road claims them. The girls semi-prostitutes, the boys sometimes living on the girls, and all of them stealing and bumming to end up with a joyous night in a box car.

The fireman on the freight train was asked what he thought when he saw the girls on the train. He answered "he didn't think a thing of it, he saw so many white girls nowadays a-bummin' on trains." Victoria Price is only one of thousands who put overalls on over all the clothes they own and hit the road; only one of thousands, one who has had all kindness and decency ground out of her in her youth.

MARY HEATON VORSE.

Kicking Hitler Upstairs

The following article is by an American who has lived many years in Germany. His name is withheld for fear of reprisals by the Hitlerite dictatorship. Other articles by him appeared in The New Republic of April 5 and April 12.—THE EDITORS.

IT CANNOT be too clearly realized that the great mass of the German people now either adore their nationalist revolution or are benevolently neutral. This explains why the German atrocities of 1933 have raised a much greater stir abroad than they have here. Aside from Communists, Socialists, Jews and foreign-newspaper correspondents, no one chooses to think about the matter at all. The drug-store man down the street, the university professor, the bank clerk and the big landowner, all take the position that nothing much has happened to the Communists, but that nothing is too bad for them anyway.

It is easy to understand the uproar in the press in other countries about the mishandling of the Jews, leaving aside the economic persecution, which in the end is going to have much the worst results. I am convinced, however, that the taste of the dark ages which the Jews have been given is not to be compared in physical violence with what Communists have suffered. This is now tapering off with the slowing up in the tempo of the whole revolution.

There is a time in the development of any fascist movement when its leader must play with the big people, must at least pretend to be their man, but at a later stage he must outgrow that if he is to be a good fascist. Adolf Hitler started in life as an Austro-Czech painter's apprentice. Some two or three years ago he did the right thing by establishing himself with the industrialists and the bankers, but unlike Mussolini, in the course of those negotiations he actually ceased to be the revolutionary and became the painter's apprentice in the presence of his betters. As such, Hitler is an obstacle in the way of the German fascist revolution. It is my opinion that the spontaneous forces at work are far too strong to be stopped by even such an impediment, around which, and over which, I think the stream of history will flow. Von Hindenburg will not live forever, and on his death the chances are that Hitler will be "kicked upstairs" into the presidency, from which height he is likely to play the part of benevolent grandfather to the fascist movement.

It is plain to all socially literate people, not only that a fascist movement gets its start among the lower middle classes and the workers with whom they can ally themselves, but also that the essential purpose of fascism is to perpetuate the capitalistic alignment of classes. But after this has been said, it cannot be made too clear that fascism is a strong social revolutionary force. Ardent nationalism, anti-semitism and all such characteristics are incidental; underlying is mass discontent, fundamentally economic, and aiming, in a groping sort of way, at an overturn within the framework of capitalism in favor of the poor and oppressed. It is no accident, and not demagoguery either, that the words socialist and worker appear in the title of the Nazi party. Neither is it an accident that all efforts at wage reductions have failed and that unemployment benefits have been somewhat increased since the National Socialists have come to power. Göring, who is a better fascist than Hitler, made a speech the other day in which he talked at great length about socialism, saying that the Marxist ideas cannot simply be tossed aside, but rather they must be replaced by other and better socialist theories. What these are he did not say, and it does not matter that even good fascists, like most revolutionaries, have none but the most confused notions of what socialism really is.

Hitler has brought together the leaders of such revolutionary forces and aspirations, and such men as Hugenberg who are bitterly and vindictively conservative, and who would, for example, like to destroy all the labor unions and expose the workers to the worst degradations of a bankrupt capitalism. It is not hard to predict that this effort at coöperation will sooner or later fail, and it is likely to be the more radical elements which will prevail in the struggle for power. An example of this has been the scuffle which has been going on for weeks to see who would become Prime Minister of Prussia. The choice was between von Papen and a National Socialist, and it is significant that the job was given to Göring. As the struggle develops, the parvenu Hitler, the man who would conciliate the bankers and the steel magnates, must either undergo a change or be pushed aside.

If the Nazis are going to keep power for a long time, they have got to get the credit for economic recovery. Can they do this? If so, how?

If you put these questions to any National Socialist, high or low, you always get an answer which

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runs something like this: "The genius of our leader has achieved political accomplishments in the last few years which no one would have thought possible; we believe similar economic wonders will be achieved, but we do not know what he has in mind. We believe we can leave it to Hitler."

The only specific economic measures so far have been the abolition of the very heavy tax on new automobiles, and a stiff increase in the taxation of chain-store systems. It seems that the former will stimulate automobile production at the expense of the government budget and that the latter will do something to help the small retailer while making still worse the already great contradiction between the costs of production and distribution. The Nazis are frankly out to do all they can for the left-over remnants of pre-capitalism, the small trader and the small farmer.

For the rest, about the only thing seems to be the compulsory labor service. If it goes according to plan, a million young men will be taken off the labor market, regimented and put to work reclaiming agricultural land. This may help the foreign-trade balance by reducing the necessity for food imports, but it looks as though it would make additional subsidies necessary for the farmers.

If the time is coming when compulsory labor service will be commonly resorted to, we may see an interesting development, namely, the slow destruction in the mind of the proletarian of the fiction that he is free. The German labor movement during the coming months will nearly disappear, with its political parties destroyed and its trade unions become a branch of the fascist state, a sort of gigantic company union. In spite of this it will pay to watch the German working class very carefully during its present transition, to see just how the unions are taken over, to see how the worker takes to his new masters. And all this time we must remember that the proletariat will still be the proletariat, that it will be incorporated *into* the fascist state, and that fascism can only be blown up from within.

Berlin. Y. K. W.

Food in Russia

III: *State and Collective Farms*

THE SUDDEN substitution of ultra-modern, large-scale collective farming for traditional small-scale individual farming in the U.S.S.R. was a measure so all-pervading that in its ultimate effect it was tantamount to another revolution. And, like all revolutions, it brought in its immediate wake no end of maladjustment and chaos. The chief difficulty of collectivization, a difficulty which has not yet been overcome, was that of efficient and profitable organization. There were not enough surveyors, bookkeepers, managers, agronomists, mechanics, tractor-drivers, tractors, trucks, implements, fertilizer. Blunders were made galore. Bureaucratic abuses, "Leftist zeal," stupidity, were rampant. People had to grope for new forms of collective labor and collective living, for ways of determining each member's contribution in labor and in goods to his collective farm, for methods of equitable remuneration, for means of establishing satisfactory relations between the state and the collective farm—errors were inevitable. The countryside was in turmoil.

Thousands of kulaks, some of them admittedly the most efficient and industrious peasants in the village, were deprived of their property, uprooted from their lands and, together with their families, shipped to remote and alien regions. Among the most negative results of the sudden collectivization campaign was, no doubt, the wholesale slaughtering by the kulaks of their livestock. Peasants gorged themselves sick—preferring that to surrendering their cattle to the kolhozi. According to official figures issued in 1930, the Soviet Union had lost during the early period of collectivization one-half of its pigs, one-third of its sheep and goats, almost one-third of its cattle and from 60 to 75 percent of its poultry.

In the matter of grain and other foodstuffs, however, collectivization brought about, for a time, at least, a turn for the better. Fortunately, the kulaks could not destroy the lands. In 1927-28—during the "grain-strike" period—the state managed to collect from the peasants only 11 million tons of grain; in 1928-29 the figures remained about the same; in 1929-30, however, the figures suddenly rose to 16 million tons, and, in 1930-31, to over 22 millions.

Whatever may be said of the hasty and inefficient manner in which the collectivization campaign has been carried on, one indisputable fact remains—almost all of the grain, meat, sugar beets, vegetables, dairy products, obtained by the Soviet government are obtained from collective and state farms. (In 1930, the government collected 41,040 tons of butter and 615,000 boxes of eggs; in 1931 the figures rose to 81,192 tons of butter and 823,000 boxes of eggs.) The small individual peasant, the petty proprietor, the carrier of bourgeois tradition and sentiment, has lost his economic foothold in the village. Within four years, over 200,000 collective farms and about 5,000 state farms have been formed. Sixty-two percent of the peasant population has

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been drawn into collectives. Over 80 percent of all the arable land in the Union is now worked by collectivized farmers and the state. Since the beginning of collectivization, Russian agriculture has been enriched by 120,000 additional tractors; by over 1,500 million rubles' worth of agricultural machinery; by about 2,500 tractor stations, equipped with modern machine and repair shops, with automobiles, trucks, etc. The kulaks have been practically liquidated and the poor peasant has vanished from the village scene. The obsolete three-field system has almost everywhere in the Union given way to the many-field system and scientific rotation of crops. Through the amalgamation of millions of petty households, vast tracts of land wasted in boundaries have now been put to productive use. There has been an extension of the sown area by 21 million hectares—all in a period of four years!

Colossal have been the Bolshevik victories in the village; but great, too, have been the failures. And it is to these failures that the present food scarcity in the Soviet Union and the difficulties encountered in the grain collections are in no small measure attributable.

The first, most spectacular failure has been the lack of revolutionary vigilance. Content with their relatively easy victory in collectivizing the village, the Bolsheviks switched their entire attention and energy to the heavy industries. Their most capable leaders and organizers were thrown into the mines, the shops, the factories. The collective farms were left to shift for themselves, without direction or guidance. This was a grave blunder. As last year's grain collections prove, the struggle between the individualist and the socialist elements in the village is not nearly over. After a period of imperceptible smoldering, it has suddenly flared up with intensified violence. The Bolsheviks were being outmaneuvered. While they were busy taking one industrial fortress after another, scaling one rampart after another, the enemy in the back was gathering his forces.

The point is that not all kulaks had been "liquidated." The cleverest ones managed to remain, to enter collective farms and to demoralize them from within. Some far-sighted kulaks had envisaged the collective farms as a means of consolidating the peasants in a union against the government. Furthermore, there were not enough trustworthy literate people in the village to fill the positions of bookkeepers, managers, organizers. The 200,000 kolhozi and 5,000 sovhozi offered countless openings to former Tsarist constables, policemen, petty clerks, people with shady and counter-revolutionary pasts. Far from the city, hidden from the vigilant eyes of the G.P.U. and other working-class organizations, these people came creeping from every nook and corner of the great land, insinuating themselves into all kinds of jobs in the collective farms. They entered unobserved and unmolested; and while the Bolsheviki were engaged on the industrial front, proceeded, hand in hand with the kulaks, to capture the positions of influence and authority in the village soviets, coöperatives, collectives, machine and tractor stations. Instead of waging an open struggle, they now worked underground. Many of the village Communists, inexperienced, uneducated, not steeled in the battle, not sufficiently alert to machinations, often clinging themselves to the old peasant mentality, became ready and yielding tools in the hands of the enemy.

Though socialist in form, a collective farm does not really become a socialist economic unit until the peasants became psychologically adjusted to the demands of a socialist community. Selfishness, dishonesty, laziness, irresponsibility, cannot be easily eradicated. The peasant often feels that by having joined a kolhoz he has shifted all responsibility to the collective. "Let the others work," he thinks; "I have joined the kolhoz so that I may take a rest."

The peasant, albeit he has joined a collective, does not think in terms of giving. He knows only one thing: his wants. He wants credit, exemption from taxes, preferential treatment; he wants tractors, shoes, clothes; he wants sugar, tobacco, kettles, trucks, spoons, forks, knives, fertilizer, everything. Above all he wants to keep as much as he can of what he produces for himself. One summer I was in Georgievsk in the northern Caucasus. Not an egg, not an ounce of butter was to be found in the entire town. When I came to the neighboring village, the peasants, with characteristic Russian hospitality, placed dozens of hard-boiled eggs and heaps of butter on the table. To my question why they did not sell some of the eggs, of which there seemed to be a superabundance, to the government, the peasants answered laughing: "We have learned to eat eggs and butter ourselves, little father!" Clearly, an attitude such as this, disturbing enough to the Soviet plans when maintained by individual peasants, becomes a serious menace when persisted in by a peasantry joined in collective farms that are managed by saboteurs and controlled by people inimical to the government.

The decree issued on May 6, 1932, permitting kolhozi as well as individual peasants who had carried out their contractual obligation to the state to sell their surplus grain on the open market failed to take into consideration the disposition of forces in the village. The possibility of selling grain on the open market at prices much higher than those received from the state fired the peasants' cupidity to the highest degree. Instead of expediting grain collections, the decree served as a stimulus for the peasants to lie about their crops, hide their grain and default in the performance of their obligations. Their calculation was simple—the less we give to the government, the more we have for the open market. Here are a few specific cases which will illustrate to the reader the form which the struggle in the village assumed during the recent

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grain collections. The kolhoz Stroitel offered to the state 11,464 pounds of potatoes instead of the 29,100 pounds provided for by contract. On investigation, it turned out that the Stroitel was wholly in the hands of kulaks. The bookkeeper of the kolhoz was Alexander Podkopaiev, a former merchant, whose main work in the kolhoz had been to encourage his friends to steal communal property, to agitate against the Stroitel's carrying out its agreement with the state, and so to manipulate the figures as to create utter confusion in the accounts of the farm. His aide, Ivan Lakutin, turned out to be a kulak who had murdered the Communist Kotov during the early days of collectivization.

Kolhoz Vysokusha tried to hide from the collectors 18,260 pounds of potatoes, 14,740 pounds of hay, 10,000 sheaves of flax, 3,300 pounds of corn, etc. By the time these things were unearthed, they were completely spoiled. When the five leading members of the kolhoz were brought to trial, it was discovered that they were all former kulaks.

The Budanov kolhoz was notorious for its consistent failure to carry out the economic and political measures of the government, its criminal neglect of the livestock and fields, its sabotage of the grain collections. Here the chairman was the Communist Fedotkin. This "comrade" worked hand in hand with the kulaks, robbing communal property and destroying the collective cattle. The Budiony and Shuisky kolhozi presented similar pictures of kulak domination. All these kolhozi are in the same Valdai district, near Leningrad. In other regions, particularly in the northern Caucasus, the situation has been even worse.

On the whole, the Bolsheviki have discovered that a collective farm, though socialist in form, may be completely bourgeois in content. It all depends on the guidance. Where there were good Communists at the head, the collective farm showed excellent results; where there was no revolutionary vigilance, the collective farm fell prey to counter-revolutionary elements—saboteurs, kulaks, thieves —and the results were lamentable.

More fundamental than lack of vigilance, however, has been the failure to make the kolhozi and sovhozi profitable. Despite intensive mechanization, the average increase in yield per acre has been too slight to compensate for the government's tremendous investments or to satisfy the city's growing demand for bread. To say that this defection is the inevitable result of insufficient vigilance, or of bad crops due to climatic conditions, is to tell but a part of the story. Other important factors have been involved. Of these, the most important has been the time element. Even if every Bolshevik were an ideal administrator, every peasant ideally trained, the weather conditions perfect, and even if there were no class enemies to contend with and the industrial base for collectivization had been previously laid (which was not the case, since almost all of the tractor and machine factories have been built during the last few years), it would still be chimerical to expect 205,000 huge agricultural enterprises to show satisfactory results during the process of organization. It is a marvel that there has not been more chaos—now there is no oil, now there is a scarcity of spare parts, now the roads are washed away, now the only available tractor driver has dropped dead, now the one truck has broken down. Time is needed for things to become better adjusted. Considering the magnitude of the transformation, four years is a ludicrously short period.

Another important factor has been the failure of the Bolshevik government to provide the kolhoz, as well as the individual peasant, with sufficient incentives to produce more foodstuffs for sale. The low prices the peasant receives from the state might give more of an incentive were the peasant able to use his money to purchase manufactured products. But when there are no such products to be had, rubles are of little value. Under such circumstances, government grain collections are, to the peasant, no better than confiscation, and kulak propaganda to restrict sowing, to restrict harvesting, to sabotage collections, falls on receptive ears. True, within the last years, the government has given to the village infinitely more than the village has given to the government—billions of rubles' worth of tractors, combines, trucks, oil, schools, experts. But this has not provided sufficient stimulus for greater effort on the peasant's part. After all, the peasant is not interested in mechanization for mechanization's sake or in increased production for its sake. He wants the products of the lighter industries, and not until he gets them will he willingly put greater labor into the soil.

The present trials are the trials of transition. Things in the village are bound to improve. The Bolsheviki are confident that collectivization has definitely started Russia on a path of agricultural progress. The second Five Year Plan contemplates continued development along the lines already laid out—mechanization, scientific management, planning. The emphasis now, however, is to be, not on extending the sown area, but on more intensive utilization of the lands already under cultivation. This year the government projects a further expenditure of 2,000 million rubles for the improvement of agriculture—27,000 more tractors, 320 more machine and tractor stations, 550 million rubles' worth of new agricultural implements.

That is not all. Recent laws and enactments have been adopted to remedy the evils I have depicted. On June 25, 1932, the Soviet government passed the "Revolutionary Legality Law," and on August 7 of the same year, the much decried law which makes the stealing of communal property equivalent to counter-revolution and punishable by death. In a few months the law has proved extremely effective in greatly reducing the number of robberies in kolhozi and other Soviet organizations.

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This year a special check-up on all bookkeepers, managers and watchmen of collective stores will be instituted; suspicious characters will be "mercilessly liquidated," and any deception or willful irregularity in the keeping of books shall be considered as aiding and abetting the class enemy. Revolutionary discipline has been introduced in the work of the kolhozi. If a member of a kolhoz declines to perform any assigned task, the management shall fine him to the extent of five days' pay; a second refusal entails expulsion. In certain districts in the north Caucasus where the Cossacks, the one-time darlings of the Tsars, have recently been offering passive resistance by refusing to sow, harvest or sell grain to the government, the Bolsheviki have not hesitated to uproot whole settlements and ship them to the Far North.

A recent decree (January, 1933) has changed all grain procurements from a contractual to a tax basis. That is, instead of the former system of contracting, the peasants now sell to the state fixed obligatory quotas at fixed prices. The change was based on the favorable results of a prior change in the procurements of meat (September, 1932) and dairy products (December, 1932). Since the state procurements had the force of a tax, meat and dairy deliveries to the industrial centers had speeded up. On February 21, 1933, the same system of procurements was extended to sunflower seeds and potatoes. Thus the main foodstuffs are now on a tax basis. The change is expected to stimulate production. Since the local taxes are fixed by regional committees on the basis of norms supplied by the central government and not subject to bureaucratic changes by local officials, an element of security and certainty, heretofore totally absent in the peasant's relations with the state, has been finally created. The peasant now knows precisely the amounts he will have to sell to the state and he is not afraid of arbitrary rulings. Anything he produces above the tax norm, he may consume, sell or do anything he pleases with.

To provide the peasant with a still greater incentive to produce above the tax quota and his personal needs, the government proposes to invest this year 750 million rubles in the light industries. This will be an increase of 48 percent as compared with 1932 and 200 percent as compared with 1927-28. Though the program for the light industries in the first Five Year Plan has not been fully carried out, a solid base has been laid for their rapid development. Modern methods and processes have been learned and new branches of light industry have been started. Most of the machines used in the light industries, machines heretofore imported, are now being produced in Soviet plants. Furthermore, the Soviet Union is now producing practically all the raw materials needed by the light industries—cotton, flax, hemp, silk, minerals, metals, synthetic products. In view of all this, it is not unreasonable to expect, within the next few years, the disappearance of what has been the cardinal source of friction between city and country.

To make sure that all measures, decrees and laws are properly carried out in the village, and to strengthen the cultural and political work there, the Central Committee of the party ordered (January 13, 1933) the formation of political departments in all sovhozi and machine and tractor stations. The political departments are to function as the eyes, ears and arms of the party. They must stand guard against bureaucratic abuse of power, against unjust administrative pressure. They must activize the non-party peasants and get them to coöperate with the party and Comsomol nuclei. Everywhere they must vigilantly guard against the destruction, misappropriation or criminal neglect of collective goods. They must see that proper seeds are used and that sowing, harvesting and weeding are effected as prescribed by the agricultural department. They must make certain of a rigid labor discipline. Above all, they must be merciless in discovering, exposing and expelling class enemies. Thousands of the best Communists have been drafted in the political departments.

The Bolsheviks have learned their lesson in 1932, and are quite resolved not to repeat old mistakes in 1933. More tractors, more machine stations, better discipline, greater revolutionary vigilance, more products of the light industries, an improved system of food procurements, will, it is hoped, bring a definite change in the work of the kolhozi, bring greater productivity of agriculture and more bread for the city population.

To base one's judgment as to the practicability of collective and state farming on Russia's present food and grain-collection difficulties would be unwise. Collectivization presents one of the aspects of the food situation. The peasant's reluctance to part with his grain is not a new phenomenon. It existed in the period of military communism and in the last stages of the New Economic Policy. The three basic causes of the present trouble in the village are not inherent in the principle of collective or state farming; they are extraneous and, I believe, removable. At the moment I am writing these lines, thousands of peasants are forming new collective farms on their own initiative. The old farms are intact, they show no tendency toward disintegration. It may surprise the reader to learn that even in the Valdai district where I have shown kulak influence to have been so powerful, one thousand peasant households have formed twenty-nine new kolhozi since September, 1932. The reason is obvious: The kolhoz represents too palpable an advance in the economic, social and cultural life of the peasant for it permanently to succumb to kulak propaganda.

JOSHUA KUNITZ.

In his next article, to appear soon, Mr. Kunitz will discuss food distribution and labor discipline in the U.S.S.R.—THE EDITORS.

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Washington Notes

Skepticism about Washington and London—War Debts Again—the "If" in Every Bill—Progressives' Doubts

DESPITE the glittering generalities of the joint communiqués which were the climax of the conversations between President Roosevelt and the Messrs. MacDonald and Herriot, which exuded amity, concord and a noble desire for the welfare of the human race, there is in Washington a strong current of pessimism about the World Economic Conference. On the surface, and from the dispatches of the still admiring Washington correspondents, one would say that "progress" had been made. The pessimistic note is struck by the more experienced observers, who were closer on the inside and are congenitally skeptical concerning all international conferences. Reflecting upon the futility of those which have taken place in the past fourteen years, I am inclined to think that this skepticism is well based. At any rate, the conviction of the insiders is that the Washington conversations were meaningless, had naught save a publicity value, and that the conference has been doomed before it starts. Certainly this is a dismal view to take in a world so urgently in need of coöperation, yet plausible arguments are made in its defense.

In a broad general way, what these hard-boiled realists in the conference field say is this: The heads of the foreign governments were invited over here to discuss a certain set of questions. While they were in the middle of the Atlantic, the cards were shifted and a new deal, in the form of the American departure from the gold standard, was sprung without warning. When the foreign representatives arrived, they thus found themselves unable to discuss the questions they had been invited to discuss and not empowered to discuss the new ones which had arisen. The net result was that, back on their own side of the ocean, the French and English got together in a joint movement to stabilize the pound and the franc, regardless of what is done with the dollar. This left Mr. MacDonald and M. Herriot with nothing to tell Mr. Roosevelt except that they were in hearty accord with his desire for peace, prosperity and happiness. It is further contended that the French and British experts who were sent over far outclassed our experts in their knowledge and their ability to figure. This is the easier to believe because some of our experts were not experts at all and had never before sat in such a game. All in all, the contention is that the conversations ended in a demonstration that there will be neither American leadership nor domination in the World Conference, and that our chief function over there will be to make concessions.

In the matter of the debts, there is no definite information, chiefly because there was no chance to reach any definite agreement. Mr. Roosevelt is still without authority to negotiate with a free hand and neither MacDonald nor Herriot had a free hand when he started. What still seems certain about the debts is that they will not be paid. The provision in the inflation amendment permitting us to accept $200 million in silver may be so manipulated as to enable the British to get past the June 15 payment, but it hardly solves the French situation, in which is included the December default. It is still likely that Mr. Roosevelt will ask of Congress complete power to negotiate before the end of this session, but it seems less likely now than it did a month ago that that power will be given. For one thing, the honeymoon, so far as Congress is concerned, seems definitely on the wane, despite the fact that the whole vast Roosevelt program will probably go through reasonably intact. But the undercurrent of resentment has strengthened and the number of Democratic Senators who complain as they go along has increased. All this was, of course, to be expected. It was utterly impossible for a man to launch so gigantic, comprehensive and experimental a legislative program without, soon or late, encountering determined opposition and arousing the intense hostility of various interests which are, or believe they are, threatened with a disturbance of their stability. It is natural, too, that there should be resentment among the politicians toward the university group by which Mr. Roosevelt is so closely surrounded, in which he has unbounded confidence and upon which—quite justly I think—responsibility for much that he has proposed is placed. Despite all this, my observations and inquiries convince me that while the popular enthusiasm over the President has diminished to some extent, the great bulk of public sentiment is still strongly behind him. So long as that remains true, Congress will follow and he will get what he desires.

The really interesting and, I think, important feature of the whole Washington picture is that Mr. Roosevelt's decisions are all yet to be made. The remarkable degree in which every power now granted, or to be granted, him is made optional and not mandatory, is beginning to percolate into the minds of those who give it. In every section of every big bill there is an "if." All of the power is permissive. Mr. Roosevelt is granted authority such as no President ever dreamed of asking before, but he is not directed to use that authority, and is in no way compelled to do so. Moreover, he has most completely refrained from definitely committing himself to any proposition. Except that he has the power, he is in precisely the same position, it seems to me, that he was in before his inauguration, when in New York and Warm Springs he was receiving visits from Democratic statesmen of all elements and factions, all of whom departed with the conviction that the President-elect was in complete sympathy with their views. It is true that within the past three weeks the President's proposals and press conferences have indicated a definite leaning in the progressive direction. This has, of course, greatly grieved Democrats of the Carter Glass school and has given the Republican regulars their first opportunity for a united attack upon the alleged financial unsoundness of the administration's policies. The progressive leaders have been enthusiastic over what they firmly believe is the convinced liberalism of the White House.

However, now that the point has been reached where the powers asked have practically all been conferred, some of the President's progressive supporters are afflicted with doubts. Partly, these spring from the fact that conservative Democrats, both in and out of Congress, greatly excited over what seems to them the reckless and ruinous

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nature of the Thomas inflation amendment, have been to the White House and seen the President. They returned with their fears allayed and in a much more serene state of mind. Privately, they let it be known that the President does not intend to embark upon any extensive inflation, that the powers conferred will be sparingly used, and that such inflation as is provided will be under such rigid control as not to justify the apprehensions voiced by Senator Glass and entertained by a good many others. In addition, there is the defense offered by some of the inner White House circle for the Roosevelt support of the Thomas amendment, that it was necessary in order to avert mandatory inflation action by Congress. These arguments somewhat comfort the conservatives, but they shake the confidence of the progressive leaders of the fight. The plain fact is, as I have stated, that Mr. Roosevelt, while acquiring power, has as yet to make a single decision and both sides in the Senate are uncertain as to his future course. I rather think he is uncertain himself. Certainly the eager corps of correspondents has not been able at recent press conferences to pry out of him anything in the nature of a concrete commitment in any direction.

Washington. T. R. B.

Other People's Money

Stage-Management in Wall Street—Holding Out on the Investor—Was the Boom Genuine?—Vacationing on the Farm

THE SECURITIES bill now pending in the Senate to protect investors will need some changes if the proposed protection is to be extended to those who buy stocks for investment. Stocks are not sold like bonds. Bonds are offered publicly. Stocks seldom are. Bonds are usually hawked about by bond peddlers or banks. The mechanism for distributing stocks is such that the safeguards set up in the bill will hardly touch it all.

Ordinarily, in the case of a new company, while the actual cash is being raised by the sale of bonds, or perhaps preferred shares, the common stock is delivered to the organizers or insiders without their putting up any cash whatever, or at least very little. The stock is not offered to the public at once. It is held in order that the organizers can pump a little sales value into it. Sooner or later the stock will be listed on some minor exchange. Then, when the moment for unloading arrives, various brokers will be instructed to buy and sell. Each day sales will appear on the ticker. There will be a definite movement up, the proper kind of "news" will find its way into the papers. Rumors will originate mysteriously. There will be greater activity in the stock, as the brokers carry on their operations. The public will take notice. Presently they will begin to buy. The price will continue to rise and as it does the insiders will unload their shares at the best prices they can get.

In most cases the services of salesmen will not be employed at all. By this process of "advertising" through market activity, the shares will find their way to the public entirely through the orderly processes of the Exchange.

There is, of course, nothing in the bill which reaches this or can in any way protect the investing public from this method of stock distribution. Incidentally, most of the other methods (in the case of older companies stock-purchase warrants, rights, stock dividends, conversions) are akin to this one. Very often the stock is not publicly offered until some time after the organization and then full information about subsequent activities of the company is at least as important as, if not far more important than, the original statement which the new bill requires to be filed when the stock is issued.

There is hardly a stock abuse which ran wild during these last dozen years which would have been curbed if this bill had been on the statute books.

During the past week the charge was made to the Federal Trade Commission that the Cities Service Company, through one of its subsidiaries, traded in its own stock. What it is charged with doing is an example of the method described above for "advertising" a stock on the market by fictitious activity. An examiner of the Commission declares that in 1927 the Cities Service Securities Company, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of the Cities Service Company, made many purchases of Cities Service stock, and that the growth and decline in the volume of trading in the stock kept pace with the purchases made by the Cities Service Company. Whether this is true or not remains to be seen. If it is, it offers a good example of the way in which stocks are distributed in a manner which is not reached by the securities bill at all.

For the protection of the stockholder, the important thing is what takes place in the operation of the company after it is organized, after its stocks are sold, and not before. The other day, former Ambassador James W. Gerard went to a meeting of the Allied Chemical and Dye Company and challenged their statement. As a stockholder, he demanded further information. All this has been widely printed in the newspapers. But the thing which makes this important is the sequel. Gerard got very few additional data from the tight-lipped officials. But he did force the admission that an item of stocks and bonds put down in the company's statement as worth $92,400,000 was really worth only $64,000,000. The insiders knew this, but the public did not until it was disclosed. In the three days preceding this disclosure the stock of Allied Chemical was forced up on the market from 70¾ to 94¾. It gained two of these points in the trading before the meeting. Next day the price, of course, declined. In the next two days it dipped six points. In view of the fact that most of the stocks sold to the public are not those of new but of old companies, the important thing to be required is regular and complete statements giving adequate information about the corporation, not just a statement at the time the new stocks are offered to the public.

A leading journal last week, hailing the return of good times, declared with prayerful gratitude that the American people were done with wild speculation. By an unhappy chance the editorial appeared the very day on which the stock market broke into the wildest speculation we have had in years—followed by several days which rivaled the

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old times of 1928. Now, as time has offered us the opportunity to see what has been going on there, we are justified in wondering how much of that sudden market boom was due to mere professional whipping up and how much to real public participation.

It is certainly apparent that a large number of pools have been busy with affairs just as if there had never been a year 1929 or a Senate investigation. One such pool seems clearly discernible in Auburn shares, for instance. On April 19, this stock was selling for 35½. As soon as the "boom" started Auburn sales began to mount. By April 25 the price had gone up to 49⅞. In three days sales amounted to 121,000 shares, which equals 60 percent of the whole issue outstanding. Then, on April 26, the price suddenly dropped five points and over 58,000 shares changed hands—a quarter of all the stock outstanding. Apparently somebody made money here, and it is not hard to guess who lost it.

The United States Agricultural Department announces gleefully that in the last two years two million persons went back to the farms. We know some of them. They are the boys from Broadway and Wall Street who have gone back to eat and sleep in the old homestead with Farmer Dad until hostilities are resumed on the Rialto and the Market. They have gone in droves from all the Main Streets in all the cities of the land. They are in reality quartered on the farmers for the duration of the depression.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

Mr. Beckhard's Fourth

The Comic Artist, by Susan Glaspell and Norman Matson. Morosco Theatre, April 19, 1933.

THERE are, among scores of other alternatives, two in whose light Mr. Beckhard's latest production might be discussed. One is a tired and disenchanted theatre, much of its game played out, many of its critics sick of it evidently, and reviling it, the theatre in turn reviling the critics, reviling the public, without much faith or real intention on its own part but puzzled why the public grows so contemptuous nevertheless; all of which implies a vicious circle, and, in the season's course, one isolated event (known as a production) after another, as if there were no whole, only an event, another event, another event, a litter shared by this producer or that, by this actor, this dramatist, or that, an incidental loblolly, no reflected lights, no continuity, but merely how-did-the-show-go, was-it-rotten, was-it-swell, you-tell-me? The other alternative turns on implications and significances, on qualities or adventurings rather than mere success or even boredom; it establishes a play as a part of a current that is the theatre, and its comment on this play will, to a sincere producer, be in the nature of an encouragement through relating his effort to some continuous whole.

It is this second attitude that can increase the interest in Mr. Beckhard's new venture—his fourth on Broadway—"The Comic Artist." In him we have one of those producers who more or less suddenly appear in town with a hit. "Another Language" not only showed itself to be a flexible comedy, capable of many versions from as many actors and directors, affording a dramatic situation ripe with possibilities and inexhaustibly adaptable to audiences in many parts of the world, and in the case of its first production, under Mr. Beckhard's directing, a happy and often touching play. It was also a great success, with a fat long run; it was, too, sold to the theatres of an impressive number of foreign countries. Mr. Beckhard's gift for handling a company of actors playing together was evident; there was even discernible a talent and insight for maturing actors within their own kinds, simplifying them and guaranteeing them a sincerity on the director's part that could free and reassure them. This is a fine thing to have in the theatre; it means a different working among one's actors.

Having launched matters in this fashion, then, it would have been a usual and familiar course for the producer to play up for all it was worth his theatre vein. In a theatre where it is dog eat dog, with no particular point of view, social pressure or either sentimental or causal loyalties, nobody blames one for farming one's little plot of good fortune. It is obvious that Mr. Beckhard, then, stocked with a certain amount of gilt-edged securities for the moment at least, might have gone on with his comedies, filling them out, studying them over with the recalcitrant authors, blowing the small familiar life into the scenes, so that they ran and laughed, kept house and interwove their homely textures, recognizably human, easy and applaudable. He had done so with "Another Language." To take an instance, one just now available for observation, there is Miss Ruth Gordon's play, "Three-Cornered Moon." Under his hands we might and very likely should have had a real little comedy about family life in the depression mists and uncertainties, since the play allowed for every illumination and development and was packed with intimate acting chances. What actually happens with that play, as we see it at the Cort Theatre, amounts to some few neat points, plus some niceties of acting here and there. Most of the plain substance and possibility has not been touched; it is a case where play and director merely take in one another's washing as it were. Instead of farming, or even milking, his product, Mr. Beckhard, on the other hand, took for his second venture "Carry Nation." It was in parts one of the best pieces of Americana in a long time; and, though not completely successful in production, however notable it may have been in some of the acting, it was a prophetic and important theatre event. "Goodbye Again" came then for the third venture, a second hit, not so good by any means as "Another Language," but in many places well studied and developed by the director. "The Comic Artist" sets out on another plane entirely.

This play, one of whose authors has won high praise for her "Inheritors," could have been undertaken and pushed forward only by someone who loved it, for its stage liabilities are pretty heavy. Put briefly, the story begins with the arrival of Luella McClure at the Rolfs' house on Cape Cod, the house of Eleanor Rolf's forefathers, bought back now from the Portuguese. Here she and Stephen, her painter husband, have come to live; he paints, makes wine, dreams and laughs, she envelops, calms, feeds his nature and his body. He has known Luella in Paris, her daughter had had an affair with him, but is now married to his

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brother, Karl, the comic artist. Luella, after husbands and devious ways, will now start a shop in New York. Stephen knows people, he can help her, he must. Unexpectedly Karl and Nina, his wife, arrive, mink coat, fine motor car. She is beautiful, spoiled, Karl worships her, she has her own way. This way leads her back to Stephen, and there is a sort of reverting passage of sex between them. It all ends in Karl's finding out, Eleanor's and Stephen's upset and necessity for readjusting their relationship, retracing their old happiness, etc. Meanwhile Karl's masterpiece is Muggs, comic-strip hero, always getting socked in the end; no matter what, eternally coming back to it, smiling, eager, headed for the socking. And so at the last curtain, when Stephen and Eleanor are left to solve themselves, he, with Nina, has gone away, blaming everyone but Nina.

The difficulties with such a play, or stage story, are patent enough. There is the not worn-out, but quite handled nevertheless, theme of the clown artist and his tragic-ironic motifs; and this must be freshened and brought anew to us. There is also the theme of Eleanor, the wife who makes possible Stephen's life, the life of the not important artist, the man child, the charming human being drawn hither and thither by the lures and fates around him in the world. This is a somewhat breathless matter, for the line is most delicate that divides on one hand the woman who envelops and shields and comforts such a man by being too obtuse to see what it is all about and self-complacent enough to think she knows what a man needs, and on the other hand the woman who can include and protect and make happy such a man through her divine understanding, scope and power to give. The tedium of possessiveness, all over the house like the smell of cooking, and the quiet bosom, the bright enfolding wings, are two very different matters. Watching this play I was not very sure that the dramatists quite knew this difference always, though I could see that the director did. Plays (not very frequent, the novel has oftener undertaken this field) like "The Comic Artist" suffer the peril of seeming to be suspended in some monotone atmosphere, some business of relationships, household you-and-me, our wine, our what-we-have-between-us, and so on. As if there were nothing else in the world. Such situations in art are likely either to be sultry and single-track or to be concentrated and luminous, however tragic or comic as the case may be. Clearly such a play as "The Comic Artist" can be done in two ways. It can go somewhat like Chekhov, where the method presents a ceaseless stream of detail from the mass of which arises the dramatic atmosphere and from the flux of which arise the dramatic themes. Or it can eliminate most of this naturalistic web and woof of the day and thus work only in the main themes. This latter method, obviously, rests on intensity, or rather, we might say, on a number of intensities and the order of their arrangement. Again "The Comic Artist" is not wholly sure of its method.

Nevertheless this new play is good adventuring. It affords genuine acting problems and problems for the director. Everybody connected with it learns something and will go on learning as long as the performances continue. The settings, in the naturalistic style, come off well; the outdoor scene is really convincing, a rare achievement in settings, and contains, as the scene within it progresses, moments of excellent drama and a kind of rush and check of pathos that is admirable. It catches a quality that might well be the note for the whole play, which is that nothing portentous or ominous or complacent is to appear but only the impact of an isolated moment in the lives of these people, where their past, their future and their whole selves are to be forced out of them like essences. It is with these essences that the play must be alive, it must be shy and elusive and final with them, exactly as it must avoid conclusions and stalked psychological motives.

The casting for the roles is good, is, in fact, very full of insight with regard to the personal fitness and understanding of the actor for the role. Technically the actors are not so certain. Mr. Hale, for instance, is remarkably within his part, but more performances will have to increase his technical delivery of what he knows in his head; even then it is not sure he will get what he aims at, despite his care and sincerity. Mr. Robert Allen is not only touching in his main scene, where he talks of his love and then discovers his wife's betrayal; he is also—it is not quite complimentary perhaps—useful to the part through his lack of the poetic or Pierrot element of charm, which on the stage can rush too fast toward banality and stale patterns. Miss Blanche Yurka, in the character of the poised, enveloping wife, has a role to frighten either Venus or Minerva, who to be goddesses must keep our sympathies. The main thing for Miss Yurka at this stage of her performance is to do what the dramatists seem not to have done: get a little more pleasure out of the role, resilience; in life, even if the mood be heavy the blood is not; in art there is creation, a happy exercise whatever the burden of the theme. This performance of Miss Yurka's in "The Comic Artist" is the best I have seen her do since her superb and generally acknowledged performance in "The Wild Duck," some years ago. Her problem is to subordinate much in order to give more; and this marks the rightness of what she is aiming at in "The Comic Artist."

STARK YOUNG.

A COMMUNICATION

Slums into Parks

SIR: In these days of depressed land values and delinquent taxes, among the most intolerable of municipal liabilities are slums and blighted areas. From such public enemies no large city and few small cities are free. To transform these liabilities into dividend-paying assets is a major opportunity for constructive statesmanship. The problem is not, as is generally assumed, incapable of solution. On the contrary, if scientifically financed, such projects can be made—to use the now popular term—"self-liquidating."

Assume, in a given city, that 3 percent of the taxable real estate is in slums or blighted areas—decayed or decadent districts, where not even the depressed real-estate values of today can be maintained by the depressed human beings inhabiting these squalid "homes." Assume that by waving a wand, the other 97 percent of real-estate ownership could transform this wretched 3 percent of value into playgrounds and parks and sites for future public build-

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ings. Can it be doubted that the result, immediate or soon, would be an increase of many times 3 percent in the aggregate value of taxable land in that city? And can it be doubted that there would be even greater dividends in reduced tuberculosis, juvenile delinquency, adult crime and other sources of moral and physical infection?

Instead of an imaginary wand, let us search for practical methods of procedure. It may be assumed that the enriched 97 percent of land ownership would gladly pay the 3 percent of cost out of its resultant benefits. The same principle would apply, whether the figures were 95 percent and 5 percent, respectively, or 98 percent and 2 percent. The immediate problem is the financing of the purchases from which these future profits will accrue.

Here is an opportunity for the Reconstruction Finance Corporation which an act of Congress could readily authorize. Let the federal government provide the purchase money to buy up and transform these slums and blighted areas into public open spaces. Let the work of demolition and beautification be done by the cities, but let the R.F.C. hold title to the land until its loan is repaid in full. One method of such repayment would be for the cities to levy, when good times return, a special land tax at a low rate —say 5 mills on the dollar of taxable land value—this tax to continue in each case until the R.F.C. loan to that particular city has been amortized. An alternative or additional source of revenue would be special assessments for benefits accruing to property in the vicinity of the newly created open spaces.

The desirability of slum clearance by some such method as this can hardly be doubted. Its constitutionality may be questioned; but it seems much more sound, both as to the public purpose to be achieved and as to the security to be offered, than many other uses of federal funds now practised or under serious consideration with high legalistic blessing. If Congress cannot or will not pass the necessary legislation, state or municipal funds might in many cases be made available. Special "Open Space Authorities" might, if necessary, be created as instrumentalities of the several states, with the right to issue their own bonds, the proceeds to be expended and amortized in a manner similar to that suggested for the R.F.C. funds.

If we are to embark on a vigorous policy of slum clearance, thought must be given, of course, to the adequate housing of the dispossessed tenants and home owners. In most cities there is a temporary surplus of vacant houses and apartments, such as they are—a surplus which is the result of shifting population and of "doubling-up" caused by unemployment. There probably is not a single large city, however, and but few smaller ones, having even today a surplus of modern, sanitary, low-rent housing accommodations. In short, almost everywhere there exists not a surplus of housing, but a real surplus of unemployment.

Concurrently, therefore, with the transformation of the slums into parks, provision must be made for such new housing as is now needed for former slum dwellers, and for the renovation outside of slum areas of existing substandard structures which may be worth saving. No greater stimulus could be given to the building or renovation of low-rent homes by private enterprise—with or without the aid of the R.F.C. loans—than would come from the prompt demolition of the congested and insanitary areas of our cities. This stimulus would apply not only to the meeting of immediate needs, but to the planning by foresighted developers of the large-scale housing projects sure to be increasingly needed when the forces now at work bring our long overdue economic revival.

Several safeguards would, of course, be necessary in carrying out the procedure suggested in the foregoing paragraphs. The problem of fair prices for the land to be acquired for open spaces—a problem always inherent in the power of eminent domain—would be the most difficult hurdle. The very fact, however, that a special land tax would be levied to cover the cost of the properties thus acquired would make landowners more watchful than usual to prevent overpayment. Acquisition at fair prices could be aided by having the city invite tenders from owners of more property than would probably be required, thus giving a wider choice of available areas, and establishing a range of prices to which the courts could give judicial consideration in condemnation proceedings for properties not obtainable at fair prices by voluntary sale. The problem of land acquisition is further simplified just now by the fact that in many cities numerous parcels of tax-delinquent real estate have come into possession of the municipality or could be acquired for public purposes at small cost.

Another practical problem of great importance would be the selection of the sites to be cleared, and the replanning of such areas for their most desirable open-space uses. Here, obviously, is an important task for city-planning commissions and for the park and recreation boards or departments of the city governments.

The transformation of slums into public open spaces would go far to meet the objection, now so generally voiced by owners or mortgage holders of non-slum property, that housing loans by the R.F.C. would give them unfair competition. If simultaneously with the stimulation of well planned, low-rent housing projects on large tracts of land, we can by the method above suggested take destructively competitive tracts of slum property permanently off the market, we shall by these combined operations help to increase and stabilize land values, give added opportunity to private enterprise in home building, stimulate employment, both public and private, and bring our American cities more nearly into line than heretofore with our attainable American ideals.

HAROLD S. BUTTENHEIM,
New York City. Editor, The American City.

Hill over Rincón

Walking, turning, saw the unlit hill,
Felt that valley Indian, without sound:
How bodies, man and beast, still, still
Lay sleeping: and sleep lay in the ground.

Felt that hill austere in finish of night,
Night that dwindles purpose to repose,
And piles up dreams in languor upon sight,
Unsenses every sense and fondles those.

But waking, turning, saw one hill intense
And kneeling on the sky for dawn: saw how
The flaky morning star, white and immense
Shook scales of blazing mica on that brow.

HILDEGARDE FLANNER.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Help for the Farmers

SIR: Your answer to Dr. Clair Wilcox's criticism of the domestic-allotment plan in the issue of March 1 covers the ground excellently. But there are one or two points that might be added.

Dr. Wilcox and other theorists seem to feel that two or three more years may be taken in debating what is the best plan to be adopted. That is a fundamental error. Farmers all through the West are on the verge of revolt. Since President Roosevelt took command, the number of direct-action incidents by farmers has decreased. But this incipient rebellion against the present situation will flame forth in full revolt this fall, unless something is done which will appreciably increase existing farm prices. While Dr. Wilcox is horrified that the farmer's income should be increased as much as proposed, has he noticed that John A. Simpson, president of the increasingly radical Farmers' Union, has protested that the proposed price level is not half high enough? . . .

Instead of bewailing the increased prices that will have to be paid for agricultural products, if the farmers are guaranteed cost of production, Dr. Wilcox and others should be insisting that wages be raised in equal proportion. It was the loss of the purchasing power of farmers and workers that brought us where we are today, and only as these two great producing classes are again placed in position to buy can our closed factories be reopened, our banks be assured of remaining open and our schools kept open.

Oklahoma City, Okla. R. M. McCLINTOCK.

Extracts from Letters

NORMAN THOMAS, New York City, writes to call our attention to two recent cases where ministers of the gospel have been penalized because of personal beliefs too radical for their congregations. One of these was the Reverend Conard B. Rheiner, pastor of the First Universalist Church of Norway, Maine. Mr. Rheiner attended a meeting of striking workers who were protesting a wage-cut by the Norway Shoe Company. Although he took no active part in the meeting, his mere presence there was enough for his parishioners, cringing before the power of the company. They turned him out. The other case is that of Donald M. Lester, pastor of the Universalist Church in Rumford, Maine. Mr. Lester incurred the disfavor of the Oxford Paper Company, which completely dominates that town, and an effort has been made to force him out of his position, an effort which, however, he has thus far successfully resisted.

Jack Cohen, Bronx, New York City, writes to call our attention to conditions in the James Monroe High School in that city. He states that the faculty are suppressing the right of free speech among the students, on the ground that the latter are tainted with radicalism. He has been expelled from the school, other students have been transferred to other institutions, and some have been forced out of the International Club, a student organization. The police have been called in to aid the faculty in disciplining the students.

When the foregoing criticisms were called to the attention of Mr. Henry E. Hein, principal of the school, he stated that "There has been no suppression of free speech amongst the students, except in so far as good taste dictates the suppression of certain topics that are better discussed as an individual matter than as a mass matter, particularly when boys and girls from the age of fourteen to seventeen are concerned. I have constantly encouraged the presentation of both sides of controversial questions not only in the classroom but in various clubs that have been organized at my direction. . . . When two or three students were taken to task for insolence and disobedience of orders, they perverted the matter into a martyrdom caused by their fight for free speech."

The John Reed Club, The New Masses and the League of Professional Groups write appealing for funds with which to rebuild the radical publishing enterprises destroyed by the Fascist regime in Germany. Funds may be sent to Anna Rochester, Room 325, 80 East Eleventh Street, New York City.

"The Theatre Collective" is looking for full-length and one-act plays dealing with present social and economic problems, for production. Manuscripts should be addressed to Samuel Rosen, 151 West Fortieth Street, New York City.

Francis Fisher Kane, Philadelphia, feels that our comment on the selection of John Collier as Indian Commissioner was unjust to those formerly charged with caring for the Indians, Messrs. Rhoads and Scattergood. He says that "I am one of those who think that 'the new deal for the Indians' began four years ago when Messrs. Rhoads and Scattergood took office. . . . If Mr. Collier can keep to the high standard set by his predecessors he will have well earned the thanks of his countrymen."

The Federation of Unemployed Workers' Leagues of America, 20 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois, through Robert E. Asher, secretary of the Temporary National Executive Committee, asks jobless leagues throughout America, which are not dominated by the Communist party, to send delegates to a convention in Chicago, May 13-15. The Chicago Workers' Committee on Unemployment and the Workers' League will feed and lodge the delegates. The chief purpose of the gathering is to unite the numerous unemployed organizations on a common program of minimum demands. "This national convention comes as the unanimous demand of the delegates from thirty-five Midwestern leagues which met at Hull-House, Chicago, last November."

Lucien Koch, Commonwealth College, Mena, Arkansas, writes on behalf of the college, which has room for a few more students at present. Students pay $40 tuition quarterly, and meet all the rest of their expenses through doing twenty hours of industrial work weekly.

Jeffrey Mark, New York City, writes to comment on Mr. Geoffrey Biddulph's letter in The New Republic of April 19, which criticised adversely the Douglas Social Credit Plan. Mr. Mark advises Mr. Biddulph that he should: One, stick at it until he understands it (the plan) or, two, give it up.

A Defense of Marxian Criticism

SIR: In regard to Allen Tate's closing comments in his "Note on Elizabethan Satire," published in The New Republic of March 15.

The best Marxians are no doubt well aware of the danger of over-simplification of the human situation, as portrayed in either camp. But all art is to a great extent an over-simplification—even the most inclusive and the most chaotic. But to say that there is no fundamental distinction between an art which over-simplifies the human situation in the favor of princes and an art that performs that callow office for the "people" is an astounding betrayal of aristocratic chauvinism. One need not lay himself open to charges of "sensational bolshevism" by being shocked at this statement. There may be no distinction in effectiveness. But intrinsically there is the distinction of human significance.

Nor need one deny that the "best wrought plans . . . schemes for the satisfaction of our desires . . . are not and never can be absolutes" to resent the characterization of Marxism as an "easy solution of the human predicament."

What the Marxist critics have attempted, however feebly as yet, to attack, along with such insensitive class prejudice as this, is not healthy-minded integrity, but that unhealthy-minded collapse of the ivory-towerists into self-searching and frustration, that collapse of the individual into his personal sufferings, comparatively unimportant. The importance of genuine integrity, of satire, of social criticism, even of a Proust, and the pre-Transition Joyce, they value.

Proletarian art, in English at least, is so young a thing—if it is yet born—that it is open to grave charges of over-simplification and technical weakness. But who are the poets of our age, so gloriously "headed by William Shakespeare," whom Mr. Tate has in mind? Who are these poets, really aware of our social and situation, and unbiased by a sycophancy born of class, who are enlightening the scene with their "moral integrity"? Does he refer to Archibald MacLeish?

New York City. MYRA MARINI.

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Mabel Dodge's Memoirs—"Hemlock in a Cup"

Intimate Memories, by Mabel Dodge Luhan. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 290 pages, illustrated. $3.

IN APRIL, 1926, D. H. Lawrence wrote to Mabel Dodge (I quote from page 296 of her own book, "Lorenzo in Taos"):

> "Memories of a Born American"—they are frightfully depressing, leave me with my heart gone way down out of my shoes, so I haven't any heart at all, feel like a disembodied corpse. . . . At the same time, I should say it's the most serious "Confession" that ever came out of America, and perhaps the most heart-destroying revelation of the American life-process that ever has or will be produced. . . . It's not art, because art always gilds the pill, and this is hemlock in a cup. . . .

Even this first volume of Mabel Dodge's memoirs reveals much of the truth in Lawrence's statement. Here is the beginning of a life work as significant in its own way as any one of a chosen number of French eighteenth-century memoirs written before the Revolution; and in this list we must not forget to include Rousseau's "Confessions." Mabel Dodge possesses a kind of genius, that particular kind which appears in revival meetings, the genius of self-hypnosis. It is inspired by the need for an ultimate excitement of all the senses, not merely sight, taste, hearing and sexual power, but also an excitement of that farthest reach of human experience, buried deep within the individual: what Plato called the soul.

The revelation of Mabel Dodge's early environment in the city of Buffalo makes clear her legitimate need for the excitement she sought with all the energy of a healthy, well fed human body. It is possible to believe that from the day of her birth the woman was one of those rare creatures whose tremendous physical power was kept running the full span of twenty-four hours in the day. The society that surrounded her was a rising American leisure class driven to the edges of insanity through boredom. Her father was the son of a Buffalo banker, her mother the daughter of a Wall Street millionaire; both were products of a civilization in which release from profit-gaining occupation was a sin. Since they were already branded with this fiery defiance of the American godhead, lesser sins of idleness were taken for granted and their vision of moral responsibility became completely distorted. Mabel Dodge's story of how her father made a fetish of paying his monthly bills before he received them is adequate proof of the degeneration of moral values that follows when property rights have superseded the rituals of religion. The slow mounting of a sense of sin locked Mabel Dodge's parents behind the doors of an atrocious Buffalo mansion from which there was no escape.

It is not necessary for us to believe everything that Mabel tells of them. Her own release from moral obligation to society denies the obligation of reciting factual truth; and for the moment of writing these memoirs, she is absolute: her friends, her enemies, her relatives, are creatures of her will and of her power to invoke the resources of her imagination. Yet, the importance of her work lies in its essential truth, which is often found in the subtleties of its general atmosphere, in her own willful opinion of the things she sees and is able to write down on paper. From these we get the sharp outlines of a neurotic family, cut off, by virtue of great wealth, from the centers of American activity and of life itself—it was this atmosphere that made Lawrence feel "like a disembodied corpse."

When Mabel Dodge was nine years old (I assume she must have been that age; her dates are sometimes vague) she attempted the murder of an unattractive, anemic housemaid by pushing her off the edge of a cliff. The arrogant gesture is characteristic, and characteristic, too, is the story of the punishment she received. She was told to be the maid's servant, to serve her supper. This she performed with ease, but burst into a fit of hysteria when her pretty, voluptuous young aunt ripped open her dress and offered her breast. The indignity of being called a baby in direct, sensational terms of action, broke Mabel's poise, but did not force her to regret the crime. Incidentally the scene of this particular episode was Newport in its heyday, the eighties of the last century. Perhaps the most significant portrait in the book is the sketch of Grandfather Cook in his huge house on upper Fifth Avenue. To Mabel he looked exactly like the eagle stamped on the American dollar: a tall, spare, hook-nosed man whose sinews gave off a Jovelike radiance of electric power. Not even D. H. Lawrence, nor Robinson Jeffers, both of whom she later grew to admire, gave her the sense of awe that this man created, the emaciated symbol of American power with the mysterious banks of Wall Street behind him. Here was one personality against whose dominance her ego did not struggle; intuitively she sensed the appropriate nature of his rule.

Before the book closes there is a description of a brief visit at the home of an American expatriate in Paris whose daughters remind one of the people Proust knew well. The two Shillito girls, Mary and Violet, lived in a world of their own making and Mabel was admitted into a circle of divine captivity. An enthusiasm for Beethoven, Chopin, de Musset, Flaubert, the sound of Plato read aloud in Greek, was shared by all three, and their exchange of ecstasy with a capital "E" was like intimately sampling forbidden fruit. I suspect that Violet's attraction for Mabel was far less perverse than she would have us believe. Naturally the scene in Paris was a welcome relief from boredom in Buffalo; Mabel had found another outlet for her remarkable energy. However, the phosphorescent brilliance of decay still illuminates her telling of the story: two slender girls with protuberant teeth bow at us through the shadows. This episode furnishes a priceless detail of upper-class life in the short hours before our fleet went round the world to celebrate the smashing victory of the Spanish-American War.

Mabel Dodge's debut on the last pages of her book approximates in time the emergence of America as a world power. Her coming-out ball rises to a climax when her father orders everyone home, stamping his feet in impotent rage, his sobs mounting in crescendo as he climbs the stairs and bangs shut the door of his bedroom. Is it any wonder that D. H. Lawrence wrote:

> It [the memoirs] seems so horribly near the truth it makes me sick in my solar plexus, like death itself which finally breaks the solar plexus. Life gave America gold and a ghoulish destiny. Heaven help us all!

HORACE GREGORY.

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Why the Republic Fell[1]

The German Phoenix, by Oswald Garrison Villard. New York: Harrison Smith and Robert Haas. 355 pages. $2.50.

"THE GERMAN PHOENIX" is a generous appreciation of the difficulties under which the German Republic rose, and the achievements standing to its name. It comes at a time when the Phoenix is undergoing a thorough transfiguration which has changed its outer aspect completely. The future alone can show what of the structure erected in the years 1918-19 will survive the violent transformation it is subjected to at present.

Mr. Villard gives a vivid description of the consequences of the Peace of Versailles, and especially of the baneful results for German finance and German economics of the insane reparation settlement. He realizes better than many an expert has done how intensely childish was the imposition of an indefinite indemnity which was fixed only after two years had gone, and the total amount of which rose to such a fantastic figure that it was almost sounder finance to ignore it than to deal with it in a businesslike way. He rightly defends Germany from the reproach of having intentionally swindled her creditors. When a people is asked to pay a bigger tribute than it can afford to raise, it has to borrow the cash, and if the creditor nations who insist on its paying more than it can, insist on lending it the money to make a profit, they cannot be astonished if neither the borrowed money nor the indemnity claims are very safe investments.

Mr. Villard rightly ascribes the rise of the different "private armies" in Germany, which he depicts graphically, to the disarmament clauses of the Peace of Versailles. Conscription and compulsory military service were by no means popular everywhere in Germany before the War. But as soon as the German people were forbidden to organize their defense on lines congenial to their national character, soldiering and organizing armies naturally became the national ideal.

Mr. Villard does not, however, quite clearly realize the other element beyond Allied pressure which was responsible for the renaissance of what to him appears the old "Militarism": namely, Communism. The aims of Communism may appeal to some radical thinkers of an advanced liberal type. But the main method of Communism is force, the application of physical and moral coercion in the form of terrorism. The chief contribution of Communism to political theory is in fact the adaptation of warfare methods from foreign affairs to home affairs. The various communistic revolts in the winter of 1918-19 and in the years 1920-23 introduced these methods into German home politics. They were responsible for the return to power of the professional soldier: The new republic, which its former enemies went on starving to death, had to call to its assistance the "class" against which the November revolution originally had turned; it needed their help to defend the sober German workers against the mad onslaught of shrill Communists. German Communism can voice the true creed of Moscow Communism with all the thoroughness of the German theorists, but the national genius has always abhorred the Russian methods of putting it into practice. Some American liberals—is Mr. Villard among them?—have consistently refused to see this aspect of the problem; they have a rather academic admiration for this sort of Communism which is a failure from whichever point of view you look at it. It advocates the use of physical force and it is incapable of employing it. It has split the working class, forcing its moderate sections to fight a severe battle against Communism, and it has given the opponents of the Social Democracy an excuse for the use of those terroristic weapons, which Communism has forged but in Germany does not know how to wield, against Communism and what they regard as its allies.

The few communistic experiments the German Republic has experienced did not last very long. But they did enough harm to make Communism a "bogey," a view quite justified by the theory of Communist class warfare, but not justified by the fighting capacities of German Communists. For a very long time during the rise of the Hitler movement the Communists, while attacking the Nazis, tried to fraternize with them to a considerable degree. It was the Communists who provided the Nazis with any excuse they may have desired for the application of terrorism, while the weakness of their resistance in the hour of trial showed —fortunately for the peace of the nation—their utter incapacity of employing their own methods.

Mr. Villard, who gives a good and accurate description of German party life, heads a chapter "Centrists, Communists and Bourgeois," but he does not give much space to the Social Democrats, who until the victory of Hitlerism were by far the strongest German party. He is not quite just, moreover, to some of the motive springs of Hitlerism. There is a good deal of religious fervor in the movement, which an American, familiar with all kinds of revivalism, could easily recognize.

If Mr. Villard had gone a little farther, and if he had given a little more space to the connection of economics with politics, the causes of the fall of the German Republic would have emerged with stupendous clarity from his book.

The double pressure of foreign affairs and of a fight against two enemies at home was too much for a constitutional structure raised as an emergency. For a short time all political power had gone into the hands of an inexperienced political democracy, but the economic power remained in the hands not only of the big landowner—Mr. Villard quite rightly points out the fact that Germany is one of the few countries where so far the breaking-up of the large estates has not taken place, though it is an item in the program of the advanced Nazis—but of the big industrialists as well. They were for the time being the real beneficiaries of the War and of the revolution. They ruled the country behind the scenes, until the breakdown of the struggle against the occupation of the Ruhr. When they realized that economic power was ultimately not strong enough to control politics, they greatly favored the rising National Socialist movement. They have probably miscalculated completely, for nothing is farther away from the mind of the bulk of the Nazis than admiration for big business. In fact the Nazi movement is a strong reaction against that type of politics, popular in Germany until the crisis, which considered "economics" the main thing and did not bother about men's souls. The Nazi movement in that respect is a kind of renaissance of politics in strong opposition to economics.

Mr. Villard's book leads the reader practically to the moment when the von Schleicher government, no longer supported by the President, collapsed, and a combination of Nationalists and National Socialists grasped the power and gained a victory at the polls. Measured by the standards of a parliamentary democracy, it need not be called a sweeping victory, for they have only got 52 percent of all votes.

[1] An editorial commenting on this review appears on page 349 of this issue.

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But this result has enabled them to erect a democratic dictatorship based on a majority vote.

Anybody who wants to study the forces which have produced this result which is a real revolution, will do well to study Mr. Villard's book. It contains a wealth of facts which are not only well ordered but are interpreted in the spirit of heartfelt sympathy without which no man can tell the story of another nation. M. J. BONN.

Marie Antoinette

Marie Antoinette: The Portrait of an Average Woman, by Stefan Zweig. New York: The Viking Press. 476 pages. $3.50.

IF BY SOME happy chance, while writing this biography, Stefan Zweig had remained half deaf to the promptings of his artistic conscience, he might have brought forth a literary masterpiece. Certainly no one can arise unmoved from the reading of this powerful work. It is magnificent in its epic conception of a mediocrity engulfed and driven and tracked by her overpowering destiny. The hard light of intelligence brilliantly illuminates the author's judgments. An unrelentingly forthright and dramatic prose style provides a fit medium for the creation of a mood, a tense, surcharged atmosphere in which a puny individual struggles against fate.

Zweig impatiently tears away the pretty anecdotes that cluster like petals about the stamen of the queen's existence. He proves—without the benefit of texts—the stupidity of the hoary accusations charging Marie Antoinette not only with being "the great whore of the Revolution," but a paragon of perversity as well. His reason dismisses summarily the passionately futile strivings of some to beatify the martyred queen and the yearnings of others to deck her out in the repellent hues of treachery and baseness. With the authority of a magistrate he throws out of court the baggage of memoirs, diaries and confessions in which the lawyers of the historical and biographical guilds had packed their documents. To those bitter-enders he says in effect: a pox upon both your houses. He treats the story of Marie Antoinette's marital experiences with more candor than physicians have sometimes displayed under similar circumstances and with that full understanding of its twisting consequences which, according to reports, only trained psychologists possess. The affair with Fersen is given as it actually was—a romantic and beautiful story of illicit love. In dealing with the horrible episode in which the young dauphin tortures his doomed mother, Zweig makes comprehensible that prattling tale of incest and debauchery. Superbly sure of himself on all occasions, the author reconstructs afresh the old story and, without realizing it, he ends like many another by falling in love with the charming and graceful queen.

He sees that average, mediocre woman at tragic odds with a hostile destiny that plucked her from her mediocrity and forced her to transcend her own standards:

> Unaccustomed to suffering, she resisted and sought to escape. But with the ruthlessness of an artist who will not desist from his travail until he wrings the last possibilities from the stubborn clay he is fashioning, the deliberate hand of misfortune continued to mold, to knead, to chisel and to hammer Marie Antoinette until all the greatness derived from a long line of ancestors (though till now hidden) had been brought to light.

This interpretation, as we have noted, is more than arresting: it is convincing. In fact, it is too pat and too convincing. It awakens a suspicion which a second reading does not dispel: that in describing the technique of the artist Stefan Zweig also unconsciously avows his own method of procedure or, putting it otherwise, that it is his will and his intelligence which are guiding "the deliberate hand of misfortune." That the guidance is on the whole so effective attests the artistry of the guide; but the feeling will not down that a little less conscious straining for dramatic antitheses, a little less artifice in squeezing out the last drops of emotion, a little less calculated bluntness of tone, would not have destroyed altogether the illusion of tragedy which the author had built up. Surely the queen's existence was poignant enough to exempt its narrator from the obligation of having each chapter of it, almost each page, assume the aspect of a dramatic crisis.

LEO GERSHOY.

Clear All Wires!

Revolution: 1776, by John Hyde Preston. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 440 pages. $2.90.

MR. PRESTON is like the village atheist who, having read Tom Paine and Colonel Ingersoll, rushes around hotly declaiming the Errors of Moses. He has discovered that the American Revolution was fought by men, not gods, that it was accompanied by brutality and passion and venality, that it concerned economic as well as political issues, and that it was conducted with inefficiency and ineptitude. He is under the hallucination that this discovery is an original one—that all other histories, biographies and textbooks are still written in the mood of Parson Weems. He has packed his narrative with what he thinks is dynamite and holds his ears in ecstatic anticipation, but the explosion which was to astound the vulgar and confound the wise goes off like a popgun. The style, too, has something of this explosive quality: at times brilliant, always slashing and incisive, it aspires to a frankness that places Mr. Preston in the Donald Henderson Clarke school of historians. He is as fascinated by naughty words as a little boy with a dictionary; his pages are generously salted with "bawdy," "lusty," "lecherous," "fornication," "mistress," "prostitute": he never wants us to forget the facts of life.

No one will deny that Mr. Preston's desire to tell the truth about the Revolution and the Fathers is a laudable one. We may grant the sincerity of his purpose, the accuracy of his facts, the justice of his characterizations, and yet question whether his spirited narrative is the truth about the Revolution. For neither truth nor facts are simple things: they are both subjective and miscellaneous. Facts in themselves, selected without reference to any organizing principle, are singularly unenlightening. Mr. Preston has described some phases of the war brilliantly; he has not explained it; and the total effect of his description is as irrelevant as a kaleidoscope, as unilluminating as a street-car ride. Now it is peculiarly the function of the historian to select from an infinity of facts, and organize his selection around some principles: the alternative is chaos. Bancroft, for example, organized the American Revolution around the principle of democracy, Trevelyan around the principle of English constitutional development, McLaughlin around the principle of Federalism, Jameson around the principle of the creation of social institutions. The student may differ with any or all of these interpretations, but he cannot substitute for them a series of disjointed emotional reactions.

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Yet for all its immaturity and lack of organization, "Revolution: 1776" has decided merits. It is honest, reasonably accurate, packed with drama, hot with excitement, lively, vivacious, curiously penetrating and at times sympathetic. It reveals a thorough grasp of military tactics, a realistic knowledge of geographic and climatic conditions and a shrewd understanding of character. It is packed with most entertaining, if somewhat jaundiced, prejudices and provocative dogmatisms. Mr. Preston, however, is honest enough to overcome even his own dislikes: it is instructive to note how his respect for the character and attainments of Washington grows until in the end he becomes as sentimental as any filiopietistic biographer. Uninhibited as he is, for the most part, by conventional attitudes or loyalties, he has succeeded in achieving that rare quality, freshness of vision. He is able to look at the Revolution as if for the first time, and his account of it is notably free from the weariness, caution and nice balance that are often found in more scholarly works. Gustiness, vitality, overabundance of spirits, independence of judgment and historical innocence: these are the qualities that make the book worth reading. Mr. Preston is beyond doubt a first-class war correspondent.

HENRY STEELE COMMAGER.

Book Notes

BELLES LETTRES

THE CASE FOR TRAGEDY, by Mark Harris. *New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 196 pages. $2.*

In this thoughtful and scholarly essay, Mark Harris attempts to refute the argument advanced by Joseph Wood Krutch and the New Humanists—that contemporary tragedy is an impossibility because man has lost his traditional concepts of human dignity and a transcendent moral order. Mr. Harris believes, on the contrary, that any given age has its own theory of value, which endows the tragic creations of that age with their own validity. Tragedies flourish and die with the civilizations they portray, but the concept of tragedy is imperishable, assuming different masks in different societies.

THE VICTORIAN MORALITY OF ART: An Analysis of Ruskin's Esthetic, by Henry Ladd. *New York: Ray Long and Richard R. Smith. 429 pages. $3.*

Whether because his esthetic ideals are fundamentally at odds with those of the twentieth century, or because the immense bulk of his prose overwhelms even the most dogged moralist, Ruskin's criticism of art has thus far lacked a complete and sensible analysis. Until now the industry of modern Victorian scholarship has avoided it. Mr. Ladd, while admitting that Ruskin's "theory of art is at best a monster," has made handsome amends. His book is inexactly titled: in spite of his wide reading and his brief attention to the eighteenth-century tradition, it does not give a full account of the breadth and variety of Victorian taste. Yet Ladd has not misapplied the representativeness of Ruskin's theory and criticism. His book will serve as an indispensable guide for anyone who wishes to find a blazed trail through the tangled and baffling jungle that extends from "Modern Painters" and "The Stones of Venice" to "Praeterita."

WORLD POLITICS

THE BRITISH WAY IN WARFARE, by Liddell Hart. *New York: The Macmillan Company. 311 pages. $2.75.*

This is a collection of essays by the foremost living British writer on the history and theory of war. They cover a wide range of problems, which are subjected to a searching, unorthodox analysis. From a practical point of view the most important question discussed here is the character of the weapons that may be expected to prove decisive in the next war, and the changes in army organization, strategy and tactics that will be dictated by these weapons.

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The essays on "The Historic Strategy of Britain" and "The Fallacy of French Strategy" (namely, in the last war) are of absorbing interest to the student of history. The group of essays dealing with the general principles of strategy is notable, among other things, for the author's efforts to correct misconceptions of Napoleon's strategy which are generally current among military specialists.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS BIBLIOGRAPHY: 1919-1932, by William L. Langer and Hamilton F. Armstrong. *New York: Harper and Brothers. 568 pages. $5.*

This bibliography is based upon the book notes edited by Professor Langer of Harvard which appear in the quarterly review, Foreign Affairs. The bibliography includes books on international relations in every language. They are classified in nine sections, beginning with general international relations, and ending with Africa; and each book is characterized by a sentence. Although it is possible to quarrel with some of the characterizations, and although some fairly important books are omitted, such as Professor Eagleton's "International Government" and Tyler Dennett's volumes on Far Eastern policy, the volume as a whole is remarkably comprehensive, well organized and useful.

THE FRENCH POLITICAL SYSTEM, by W. L. Middleton. *New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 296 pages. $3.*

This little book by an editor of The London Times does not follow the systematic method of the political scientist; nevertheless it constitutes one of the most interesting and valuable interpretations of French political life and institutions that have appeared in English. The book is built around the theme that the Third Republic is a hybrid product of two revolutions—political and social—going on at the same time. Although the social issues have largely displaced the old political questions, the ever lurking question of the Church still prevents a realignment of parties upon a strict conservative-radical basis. After describing the parliamentary system, parties, elections, the Chamber, foreign policy, the Senate, the press and other related subjects, the author closes with a discussion of foreign and colonial policy. He insists that France really prefers a policy of international understanding to one of increasing armaments. Colonial policy, he says, is destined to play an ever growing importance in the general politics of France, and the sincerity of the theory of "association" is already being put to a real test in Indo-China and elsewhere.

Fiction

LOSE WITH A SMILE, by Ring Lardner. *New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $1.50.*

There is nothing in this semi-literate correspondence between a rookie baseball player and his small-town sweetheart that Ring Lardner has not written before, but this does not mean that "Lose with a Smile" is inferior to his earlier work. Lardner can repeat himself more profitably than some American writers do. His models here are "Alibi Ike," "Some Like 'Em Cold" "Horseshoes" and "My Roomie," and he imitates his own masterpieces skillfully enough to satisfy any reader who is not intent on finding between these simple lines some secret and profound misanthropy. Lardner is still master of the American language, the subtlety of his wit is unimpaired, and he does not fail to bring alive his "grooning" outfielder, Warner, and his dumb village belle, and all his retinue of gold-diggers, wisecrackers, saps and normally intelligent men. Nor is there any concession to popular-magazine form in the story's end, which is neither happy nor sad. It is simply real. "Lose with a Smile" may be a potboiler, but many an intelligent reader will find it a refreshing recovery from the self-conscious that seemed to endanger Lardner soon after his discovery by the dilettanti several years ago.

SAUNDERS OAK, by Robert Raynolds. *New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.50.*

Robert Raynolds was author of "Brothers in the West," which won the last Harper Prize. His second novel, "Saunders Oak," is much better when based upon observation than when based upon imagination. One accepts the Connecticut setting which intro-

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duces its return-of-the-native plot, but one does not accept what happens when the story gets started—and with it Mr. Raynold's fancy. Its idiots, lunatics and jailbirds are at once conventional and fantastic. The dubiousness of the author's general "romanticism" is attested by his last sentence: "Then, suddenly, as if he had uplifted the burden of his life well upon his manly shoulders, as if set free by a joyously passionate realization of his life, Saunders made God's Hollow echo with his strong, grand laughter."

Contributors

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON, author of biographies of Zola and Rousseau and of a book of critical studies of American expatriates, has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in creative writing. He is now finishing a book dealing with the rise of the great American capitalists.

MARY HEATON VORSE, novelist, journalist and labor organizer, who recently returned from Decatur, Alabama, where she covered the Scottsboro trial for The New Republic, sailed for Europe last week.

HAROLD S. BUTTENHEIM is president of the American City Bureau and is director of the National Conference on City Planning, the International Federation for Housing and Town Planning and the National Municipal League.

HILDEGARDE FLANNER is the author of "Time's Profile," a book of verse.

HORACE GREGORY, the author of a translation of Catullus and of two volumes of poetry, "Chelsea Rooming House" and "No Retreat," is at present at work on a short critical study of D. H. Lawrence which will be published this fall by the Viking Press.

M. J. BONN, a noted German economist, has been a lecturer at the Williamstown Institute of Politics and at several American universities. He was dismissed from the faculty of the Berlin School of Business after the National Socialists came into power.

HENRY STEELE COMMAGER is professor of History at New York University. "The Growth of the American Republic," which he wrote in collaboration with S. E. Morison, was published in 1931 by the Oxford Press.

LEO GERSHOY is associate professor of History at Long Island University and author of "The French Revolution and Napoleon."

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